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"The Story of our Lives from Year to Year."—SHAKESPEARE.

ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

A Weekly Journal.

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS.

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE		PAGE		PAGE
ALDBOROUGH	79	Crabbe, The Poet	79	Herring Fishery	130
Alnwick Castle	609	Cromer	226	Herr Wagner, the Composer	451
Amateur Coachmen	270	Culpeper's Complete Herbal	229	Hindoo Civil Servants	373
Amélie-les-Bains	513			Honest Miner	367
Amusements of the People	204	DAS Rheingold	452	Hop Gardens of England	109
An Experience	256, 280	Deadly Mist A	564	Horse Exercise	444
Apology for Verso	65	Death, Too Hasty Burials	189		
Apparent Death	109	Decoy Ducks	188	In Great Gorington	544
Art Purchases	297	Defoe, The Life of	132, 156	India, A Bengal Magistrate	87
As the Crow Flies, Due East:		Depths and Heights of Modern		Indian Candidates for Civil Service	379
Saffron Walden and Thaxstead		Opera	450	India, Hindoo Civil Servants	397
to Harwich	7	Disappearance of John Ackland	390	India, Loafers in	178
Harwich to Ipswich	54	402, 428, 454,	475	India, The Oriental Museum	209
Sudbury to Lowestoft	78	Dorking	378	Indian River, The	392
Yarmouth	128	Dreadnought Hospital	350	Ipswich	55
Caistor and Norwich	185	Drunkery Discovery, The	204	Isaac Walton	438
Norwich to Cromer	224	Duke Humphrey	466	Italy, Popular Songs of	19
Due South: Cheam to Epsom	273	Durdans	319		
Epsom to Box Hill	319			JOHN BUNYAN	468
Dorking and Wotton	378	EARL OF ESSEX, The	273	John Parry	232
Winchester to Lymington	437	Eastern Prodigies	125	Judge Jeffreys at Winchester	439
Due North: St. Albans to Bol-		East Indian Museum	209		
ford and Kimbolton	465	Elizabethan Adventurer	57	KENT, The Orchards in	102
Peterborough and Fotheringay	509	Elizabethan Writer	132	Kid Gloves	353
Lincoln to Somersby	536	England and France, Tunnel Be-		Kidnapping Children	212
Leeds to York	560	tween	177	Kimbolton Castle	468
Scarborough and Whitby	581	English Hop Gardens	102	King Pippin's Palace	211
Harrogate to Berwick	508	Epsom, Traditions of	275, 319		
Atlantic Yacht Race	342	Evelyn's House at Wotton	379	LADIES' Education	566
At the British Museum	252	Execution of Mary Queen of Scots	510	Landguard Fort	55
Australia, A Sight in the Bush	587	Eyam, The Plague at	161	Landor's Life	181
Authentic Singhalese Genealogy	43			Lawyers and Barristers	398, 420
		FAIR Hair	353	Lectures for Ladies	566
BABIES, The Show of	249	Falstolf's Castle at Calstar	185	Leeds	560
Babym, A New Belief	163	Farewell to an Artist	232	Legend of Dunblane	593, 616
Bacon, Lord Chancellor	467	Fasting Girls	442	Lighthouses	323
Bar, The Growth of the	397, 420	Felixstow	54	Lightsips	473
Barristers and Lawyers	398, 420	Filly Decoy	188	Lilley the Astrologer	318
Bathing in a Mist	564	Finds	380, 402	Lincoln, A Story of President	226
Battle of St. Albans	467	Finnish Story, A	307	Lincoln, Traditions of	536
Bengal Magistrate	87	Fire of London	317	Lisle, Lady, and Judge Jeffreys	439
Berwick	610	Fishers of Loch Boisdale	569	Little Pauper Boarders	301
Bicycle Riding	448	Flodden, The Battle of	81	Little Witch and the Misers	116, 139
Bloaters	131	Fotheringay Castle	510	Loafers in India	178
Bold Bigod	82	Four-in-Hand	270	Loch Boisdale, Fishers of	569
Box Hill	323	Framlingham Castle	80	Long Hair and Short	137
British Museum Visitors	252	France, Smoking in	614	Looking in Shop Windows	37
Bungey Church	83	Frederick Prince of Wales	320	Lost and Found in the Snow	15
Bunyan, Relics of	468	Forster's (Mr.) Biography of Lan-		Lowestoft	83
Buried Alive	109	dor	181	Lytelton, Lord, and the Ghost	320
		GAINSBOROUGH, The Birthplace of	18		
CABS, Communication with the		Ganges, The Course of the	393	MACKEREL Fishery	131
Driver	154	Gentleman of the Press	132, 156	Manningtree	8
Caistor Castle	185	Ghosts	305	Mary and Philip of Spain, Marriage	
Californian Miner, The	367	Ghost Story of Lord Lyttelton	320	of	439
"Camilla," The Author of	378	Gold Miners	367	Mary Queen of Scots, Execution	
Cardinal Beaufort	438	Golf, The Game of	544	of	570
Cardinal Wolsey	56	Great Drunkery Discovery	204	Mexico, The City of Puebla	60
Carter, Mrs. Elizabeth	497	Greenland Seal Fishery	105	Milk Supply of London	351
Cawnpore	394	Green Tea	501, 525, 548, 572	Minch, Night on the	294, 569
Chaffinch (Mr.) and Mr. Childers	349	Greenwich Hospital	349	Miners in California	367
Champagne Mystery, The	354	Growth of the Bar	397, 420	Mist, Bathing in a	564
Channel Tunnel, The	173	"HAD" and "Would"	255	Mole, The River	322
Cheam	273	Hair Fashions, Respecting	137	Mr. Chaffinch to Mr. Childers	349
Children, Kidnapping	212	Happy Jack	228	Mr. Nobody Abroad	33
Children, Pauper Boarders	301	Harrogate	608	Museum of the East India Com-	
Cigar Manufactures	616	Harwich	8	pany	209
Civil Service of India	327	Herbs, Medical Use of	229	Museum, The British	254
Coach, The Brighton	270			My First Money	85
Coins, Discovery of	380			My Neighbours	469

	PAGE		PAGE		PAGE
NAPOLEON Giving Audience . . .	36	SAFFRON WALDEN, Origin of the	7	Turkish Superstitions . . .	125
National Gallery, Recent Pur-		Name . . .		Twenty-one Months of Silence . .	521
chases . . .	297	Saint Martin-le-Grand's Adopted			
Natural Ghost . . .	305	Child . . .	324	UNDER the Channel . . .	173
Nature's Five Lessons . . .	611	Scarborough . . .	488, 589	Universe, The . . .	10
Naval Battles with the Dutch . .	82, 84	Scarliffe . . .	483	Unsubjected Woman, An . . .	497
New Forest . . .	441	Schneider, Mademoiselle . . .	451		
New Religion . . .	149	Seals . . .	165	VELOCIPEDE Riding . . .	443
New Uncommercial Samples. By		Seal Skin Cloaks . . .	352	Veronica . . .	217
Charles Dickens: . . .		Seaside Stereoscopes . . .	488	241, 265, 280, 313, 337, 361, 385, 409,	
A Plea for Total Abstinence . .	13	September the Second . . .	317	433, 457, 481, 505, 529, 553, 577, 601	
Night on the Minch . . .	197, 569	Shop Windows . . .	37	Victoria Park, The People in . .	204
Nobody Abroad . . .	32	Show of Babies . . .	249		
No Bribery . . .	493	Sight in the Bush, A . . .	587	WAIFS . . .	426
Nonsuch Palace . . .	273	Silence, Twenty-one Months of .	521	Walsingham . . .	225
Norfolk, The Dukes of . . .	81	Singhalese Genealogy . . .	43	Walter Savage Landor . . .	181
Norwich . . .	188, 224	Slipper Day . . .	114	Walton, John Evelyn at . . .	879
		Smoking in France . . .	614	Wars of the Roses . . .	466
OFFENBACH the Composer . . .	450	Solebay, The Naval Battle of .	84	Webb's Travels . . .	57
Old Things, What Becomes of ? .	240	Sorrow and the Mermaid . . .	330, 355	What Becomes of Things? . . .	246
Omnibus in London and Paris . .	29	Southampton . . .	444	Where do Some Things Come	
Opera, Depths and Heights of . .	450	Southwold . . .	81	From? . . .	352
Oriental Life in Little . . .	209	Spain, King Pipplin's Palace . .	212	Which is Which? . . .	416
Orwell River . . .	55	Spanish Burglars . . .	464	Why Does a Pointer Point? . .	390
		Speaking, Lost Power of . . .	521	Wigs . . .	138
PALEY, Doctor . . .	512	Spectral Analysis . . .	11	William of Wykeham . . .	433
Paris, A Sketch of . . .	33	Spectral Impressions . . .	305	Winchester . . .	437
Paris, Omnibuses in . . .	29	Speech, Long Loss of . . .	521	Witchcraft in the Nineteenth	
Parry, John . . .	232	St. Albans, Abbey and Traditions .	465	Century . . .	541
Passon Letters . . .	187, 225	Signalling versus Shouting . .	154	Witchcraft, Persecution in Essex .	8
Pauper Boarders . . .	301	Sir John Falstaff . . .	185	Withered Blossom . . .	164, 189
People, The Recreations of the . .	204	Stage Coach Revival . . .	270	Wolf Rock Light . . .	323
Persia, A New Religion in . . .	149	Stalls . . .	276	Wolsey, Birthplace of . . .	55
Peterborough Cathedral . . .	509	Stories: . . .		Woman's Rights Convention . .	517
Plague at Eyam . . .	161	An Experience . . .	256, 280	Women's College . . .	567
Planets and Stars . . .	11	Disappearance of John Ackland .	380	Wrecked in Port . . .	1
Plants, Soils and Climates for . .	391	402, 428, 454, 475		25, 49, 73, 97, 121, 145, 169, 193, 238	
Plea for Total Abstinence . . .	13	Green Tea . . .	501, 525, 548, 572	YACHT Race Across the Atlantic .	342
Poetical Coincidences . . .	416	Little Witch and the Misers . .	116, 139	Yarmouth . . .	128
Poetry, An Apology for . . .	65	Legend of Dunblane . . .	593, 616	York Minster . . .	562
Pointers, Why Do They Point? . .	390	Lost and Found in the Snow . .	15		
Poisonous Herbs . . .	229	My Neighbours . . .	469	POETRY. . .	
Popular Songs of Italy . . .	19	Night on the Minch . . .	197, 569	ACRIEL . . .	323
Post Office and the Telegraphs . .	324	No Bribery . . .	493	Bold Bigod . . .	83
President Lincoln, A Story of . .	226	Princess Yolka . . .	307	Columbia Square Market . . .	84
Press in the Time of Elizabeth . .	132	Sorrow and the Mermaid . . .	330, 355	Confes-ion and Apology . . .	348
Pretenders . . .	611	Tom Butler . . .	20, 44, 67, 91	Dame Martha's Well . . .	564
Princess Yolka . . .	307	Tontia Wood . . .	588	Death of th' Owd Squire . . .	379
Prize Babies . . .	249	Tryst in Twin-Tree Lane . . .	233	Donald Macleod . . .	549
Puebla . . .	60	Withered Blossom . . .	164, 189	Grey Monk's Miserere . . .	492
Purchas, Doctor . . .	7	St. Swithin . . .	438	In the Fall . . .	17
		Success of the Stage, A . . .	256	In the Tropics . . .	465
QUEEN CAROLINE'S Funeral . . .	9	Sudbury . . .	78	Looking Back . . .	228
Queen Elizabeth and Essex . . .	273	Suffolk, The Coast of . . .	79	Mountain Brook . . .	181
Queen Katherine's Burial . . .	468, 510	Superstitions of the East . . .	125	Nature's Five Lessons . . .	611
Queen Mary, Marriage of . . .	439	Suffolk Superstitions . . .	83	No Work to Do . . .	108
				Old Ballad Renewed . . .	204
RAIN and Rain Doctors . . .	584	THE-TOTAL Procession . . .	13	Old Ballad Rewritten . . .	419
Recent Art Purchases . . .	297	Telegraphs and the Post Office .	324	Old World and the New . . .	37
Recreations of the People . . .	204	Theatre Stalls . . .	276	Orphanhood . . .	397
Religion, a New Belief . . .	149	Tobacco Smoking . . .	614	Solebay, The Battle of . . .	82
Riding for Health . . .	444	Tom Butler . . .	20, 44, 67, 91	Summer Pool . . .	390
Robin Hood's Grave . . .	583	Tontia Wood . . .	588	Summer Sunset . . .	252
Robinson Crusoe, The Author of, 132, 156		Tourists of the Year 1800 . . .	34	Three Coloured Flag, The . . .	29
Rokoby . . .	609	Traveller's Tale, A . . .	57	To a Little Huswife . . .	280
River Mole . . .	322	Treasure Trove . . .	380, 426	Two Sonnets . . .	131
River Orwell . . .	55	Trees, The Antiquity of . . .	322	Two to One . . .	60
Rough Sketch of Modern Paris . .	33	True Story of President Lincoln .	226	Wake of Tim O'Hara . . .	155
Round Table, King Arthur's . . .	440	Tryst in Twin-Tree Lane . . .	233	Wreck off Calais . . .	12
Rufus, Death and Burial Place of 438, 441		Tunnel Under the Channel . . .	173		

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ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

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CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

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WRECKED IN PORT.

A SERIAL STORY BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP."

BOOK III.

CHAPTER IV. CANYASSING.

SPLendid as was the opportunity just offered to Walter Joyce by the parliamentary agents, it is more than probable that he would have declined to profit by it had the scene of action been laid anywhere else than in Brocksope, had his opponent been any one other than Mr. Creswell. Although utterly changed from the usher in a country school, who was accustomed to take life as it came—or indeed from the young man who, when he obtained Lord Hetherington's private secretaryship, looked upon himself as settled for life—Joyce had even now scarcely any ambition, in the common acceptation of the word. To most men brought up as he had been, membership of parliament would have meant London life in good society, excellent station of one's own, power of dispensing patronage and conferring favours on others, and very excellent opportunity for getting something pleasant and remunerative for oneself, when the chance offered. To Walter Joyce it meant the acceptance of a sacred trust, to the proper discharge and fulfilment of which all his energies were pledged by the mere fact of his acceptance of the candidature. Not, indeed, that he had ever had any thoughts of relinquishing his recently acquired profession, the press; he looked to that as his sole means of support; but he felt that should he be successful in obtaining a seat in the House, his work would be worth a great deal more than it had hitherto been, and he should be able to keep his income at the same amount

while he devoted the half of his time thus saved to his political duties.

But being, as has been said, thoroughly happy in his then career, Joyce would never have thought of entertaining the proposition made to him through the medium of Messrs. Potter and Fyfe had it not been for the desire of revenging himself on Marian Creswell by opposing to the last, and, if possible, in every honourable way, by defeating, her husband. Joyce felt perfectly certain that Mr. Creswell—quiet easy-going old gentleman as he had been of late years, and more likely than ever to be disinclined to leave his retirement and do battle in the world since his son's death—was a mere puppet in the hands of his wife, whose ambition had prompted her to make her husband seek the honour, and whose vanity would be deeply wounded at his failure. Walter Joyce's personal vanity was also implicated in the result, and he certainly would not have accepted the overtures had there not been a good chance of success; but Mr. Harrington, who, out of his business, was a remarkably sharp, shrewd, and far-seeing man of the world and of business, spoke very positively on this point, and declared their numbers were so strong, and the popular excitement so great in their favour, that they could scarcely fail of success, provided they had the right man to bring forward. To win the day against her, to show her that the man she basely rejected and put aside was preferred, in a great struggle, to the man she had chosen; that the position which she had so coveted for her husband, and towards the attainment of which she had brought into play all the influence of her wit and his money, had been snatched from her by the poor usher whom she had found good enough to play with in her early days, but

who was thrust aside, his fidelity and devotion availing him nothing, directly a more eligible opportunity offered itself. That would be sweet indeed! Yes, his mind was made up; he would use all his energies for the prosecution of the scheme; it should be war to the knife between him and Marian Creswell.

Joyce's manner was so thorough and so hearty, his remarks were so practical, and his spirits so high, when he called on Messrs. Potter and Fyfe on the next day, that those gentlemen were far better pleased with him, and far more sanguine of his popularity and consequent success at Brock-sopp, than they had been after the first interview. Modesty and self-depreciation were qualities very seldom seen, and very little esteemed, in the parliamentary agents' offices in Abingdon-street. The opinion of the head of the firm was that Walter wanted "go," and it was only owing to the strenuous interposition of Mr. Harrington, who knew Joyce's writings, and had more than once heard him speak in public, that they did not openly bemoan their choice and proceed to look out for somebody else. This, however, they did not do; neither did they mention their doubts to the deputation from Brock-sopp, the members of which did not, indeed, give them time to do so, had they been so inclined, clearing out so soon as the interview was over, and making back to the Tavistock Hotel, in Covent Garden, there to eat enormous dinners, and thence to sally forth for the enjoyment of those festivities in which our provincials so much delight, and the reminiscences of which serve for discussion months afterwards. The parliamentary agents were very glad of their reticence the next day. The young man's heartiness and high spirits seemed contagious; the sound of laughter, a phenomenon in Abingdon-street, was heard by Mr. Harrington to issue from "the governors' room;" and old Mr. Potter forgot so far the staid dignity of a chapel-deacon as to clap Walter Joyce on the back, and wish him luck. Joyce was going down on his first canvass to Brock-sopp by himself; he would not take any one with him, not even Mr. Harrington; he was much obliged to them; he knew something of Mr. South, the local Liberal agent (he laughed inwardly as he said this, remembering how he used to look upon Mr. South as a tremendous gun), and he had no doubt they would get on very well together.

"You know South, Mr. Joyce?" said

Mr. Fyfe, "what a very curious thing! I should have thought that old South's celebrity was entirely local, or at all events confined to the county."

"Doubtless it is," replied Joyce; "but then you know I——"

"Ah! I forgot," interrupted Mr. Fyfe. "You have some relations with the place. Yes, yes, I heard! By the way, then, I suppose you know your opponent, Mr. Kerswill—Creswell—what's his name?"

"Oh yes, I remember Mr. Creswell perfectly; but he never saw much of me, and I should scarcely think would recollect me!"

"Ah! you'll excuse me, my dear sir," Mr. Fyfe added, after a short pause; "but of course there's no necessity to impress upon you the importance of courtesy towards your opponent—I mean Kerswill. You're certain to meet on the hustings, and most probably, in a swellish place like Brock-sopp, you'll be constantly running across each other in the streets while you're on your canvass. Then, courtesy, my dear sir, before everything else!"

"You need not be afraid, Mr. Fyfe," said Joyce, smiling; "I shall be perfectly courteous to Mr. Creswell!"

"Of course you will, my dear sir, of course you will! Mustn't think it odd in me to suggest it—part of my business to point these things out when I'm coaching a candidate, and necessary too, deuced necessary sometimes, though you wouldn't think it. Less than six months ago, when poor Wiggington was lost in his yacht in the Mediterranean—you remember?—we sent down a man to stand for his borough. Lord——. No! I won't tell you his name; but the eldest son of an earl. The other side sent down a man too—a brewer, or a maltster, or something of that kind, but a deucedly gentlemanly fellow. They met on their canvass, these two, just as you and Kerswill might, and this man, like a gentleman, took off his hat. What did our man do? Stopped still, stuck his glass in his eye, and stared, never bowed, never moved—give you my word! Had to withdraw him at once; his committee stood by and saw it, and wouldn't act for him any more! 'Lordship be damned!' that's what they said. Strong language, but that's what they said—give you my word! Had to withdraw him, too late to find another man, so our people lost the seat!"

The first thing that astonished Joyce on his arrival at Brock-sopp was the sight of his own name printed in large letters on

flaming placards, and affixed in all the conspicuous places of the town. He had not given consideration to this sudden notoriety, and his first realisation of it was in connexion with the thought of the effect it would have on Marian, who must have seen it; her husband must have told her of the name of his opponent; she must have been certain that it was not a person of similar name, but her discarded lover himself who was waging battle against her, and attacking her husband in the stronghold which he might have even considered safe. She would know the sentiments which had prompted him in leaving her last letter unanswered, in taking no notice of her since the avowal of her perfidy. Up to this time she might have pictured him to herself as ever bewailing her loss—as would have been the case had she been taken from him by death—as the prey of despair. Now she must know him as actuated by feelings far stronger and sterner; he was prepared to do battle to the death. This feeling was pre-eminent above all others; this desire for revenge, this delight at the occasion which had been offered him for lowering the pride and thwarting the designs of the woman who had done him such great wrong. He never faltered in his intention for a moment; he abated his scheming not one jot. He had some idea on the journey down to Brocksopp that perhaps the old reminiscences, which would naturally be kindled by the sight of the familiar scenes among which he would soon find himself, and of the once familiar faces by which he would be surrounded, would have a softening effect on his anger, and perhaps somewhat shake his determination. But on experience he did not find it so. As yet he had religiously kept away from the neighbourhood of Helmingham; he thought it better taste to do so, and his duties in canvassing had not called him thither. He had quite enough to do in calling on the voters resident in Brocksopp.

As Walter Joyce had not been to Helmingham, the village folk, who in their old-fashioned way were oddly punctilious, thought it a point of etiquette not to call upon him, though such as were politically of his way of thinking took care to let him know he might reckon on their support; and of all the people whom Walter had been in the habit of seeing almost daily in the village, Jack Forman, the ne'er-do-weel, was the only one who came over expressly to Brocksopp for the purpose of visiting his old friend. It was not so much friend-

ship as constant thirst that prompted Jack's visit; he had been in the habit of looking on elections as institutions for the gratuitous supply of ale and spirits, extending more or less over the term of a month, to all who chose to ask for them, and hitherto he had been greatly disappointed in not finding his name on the free list of the Helmingham taverns. So it was well worth Jack's while to spend a day in staggering over to Brocksopp, and on his arrival he met with a very kind reception from Walter, sufficiently kind to enable him to bear up against the black looks and ill-suppressed growls of Mr. South, who, in his capacity of clerk to the magistrates, only knew Jack as a bit of a poacher, and a great deal of a drunkard.

Immediately on his arrival in Brocksopp, and after one or two preliminary interviews with Mr. South, who, as he imagined, had forgotten all about him, and was much struck by his knowledge of neighbouring persons and localities, Joyce proceeded with his canvass, and after a very brief experience felt that Mr. Harrington had not taken too rose-coloured a view of his chance of success. Although to most of the electors of Brocksopp he was personally unknown, and though such as remembered his father held him in recollection only as a sour, cross-grained man, with a leaning towards "Methodee" and a suspicion of avarice, the fact that Walter was not an entire stranger had great influence with many of the electors, and his appearance and manner won him troops of friends. They liked his frank face and hearty demeanour, they felt that he was eminently "thorough," the lack of which quality had been the chief ground of complaint against young Bokenham, and they delighted in his lucid argument and terse way of laying a question before them and driving it home to their understanding. In this he had the advantage of his opponent, and many waverers with undefined political opinions who attended the public meetings of both parties, were won over to Joyce's side by the applause with which his speeches were received, and by the feeling that a man who could produce such an effect on his hearers must necessarily be a clever man, and the right person to be sent by them to parliament. The fact was allowed even by his opponents. Mr. Teesdale wrote up to Mr. Gould that things were anything but bright, that the new man was amazingly popular, and quite young, which was not a bad thing when

great exertion was required, that he was, moreover, a clever, rapid, forcible speaker, and seemed to be leaving their man very much behind. And old Croke, who had been induced to attend a meeting convened by the Liberals, and who, though from respectability's sake he had made no open disturbance, had been dreadfully shocked at the doctrines which he had heard, not merely promulgated, but loudly applauded, was afterwards compelled to confess to a select few at the Lion that the manner, if not the matter of Walter Joyce's speech was excellent. "Our squire," he said, "speaks like a gen'alman as he is, soft and quiet like, on and on like the droppin' o' watter, but this'un du screw it into you hard and fast, and not content wi' drivin' on it home, he rivets 'un on t'other side."

Electioneering matters in Brocksopp wore a very different aspect to that which they had borne a short time previously. Mr. Teesdale had seen from the beginning that the candidature of young Mr. Bokenham was not likely to be very dangerous to his opponent, however liberally he might be backed by his indulgent father. The local agent, who had lived all his life among the Brocksoppians, was quite aware that they required a man who would at all events pretend to be in earnest, whichever suffrages he courted, and his keen eyes told him at the first glance that young Tommy was a vacillating, purposeless pleasure-lover, who would command no confidence and receive but few votes. When the Bokenham escapade took place Mr. Teesdale telegraphed the news to his principal, Mr. Gould, and in writing to him on the same subject by the next post said: "It is exactly what I always anticipated of young B., though his friends did not apparently see it. I think it will be a shock to the L's, and should not be surprised if our man had a walk-over." Mr. Teesdale was essentially a country gentleman, and though he thought Mr. Harrington a "turf cad," saw no harm in occasionally employing a sporting phrase, even in his business. But now all was altered; the appearance of Walter Joyce upon the scene, the manner in which he was backed, his gentlemanly conduct and excellent speaking had an immediate and extraordinary effect. The Tory influence under Sir George Kent had been so all-powerful for many years that all thoughts of a contest had been abandoned, and there were scores of men, farmers and manufacturers, on the register, who had

never taken the trouble to record their vote. To the astonishment and dismay of Mr. Teesdale, most of them on being waited on in Mr. Creswell's interest, declared that their leanings were more towards Liberalism than Conservatism, and that now they had the chance of returning a candidate who would do them credit and be a proper advocate of their views, they should certainly give him their support. The fact, too, that Joyce was a self-made man told immensely in his favour, especially with the manufacturing classes. Mr. Harrington, who had paid a couple of flying visits to the town, had possessed himself of certain portions of Walter's family history, and disseminated them in such quarters as he thought would be advantageous.

"Father were grocer in village hard by!" they would repeat to one another in wonder, "and this young 'un stuck to his buke and so crammed his head wi' lurnin' that he's tow't to three Lards up in London, and writes in newspapers—think o' that now!" It was in vain that old Teesdale, when he heard of the success of his opponent's move, went about pointing out that Mr. Creswell was not only a self-made man, having risen from nothing to his then eminence, but that all the money which he had made was engaged in the employment and development of labour. The argument was sound, but it did not seem to have the same effect; whatever it was, it had the same result, a decided preference for Mr. Joyce as against Mr. Creswell, amongst those who, possessing votes, had hitherto declined to use them.

But there was another class which it was necessary to propitiate, and with which Mr. Teesdale was afraid he stood but little chance. Many of the "hands" had obtained votes since the last election, and intended making use of their newly acquired prerogative. There was no fear of their not voting; the only question was on which side they would cast the preponderance of their influence. This was soon seen. Naturally they were inclined to support Walter Joyce, but whatever lingering doubts they may have had were dispelled so soon as Jack Byrne appeared upon the scene, and, despite of Joyce's protests, determined on remaining to assist in the canvass. "Why not," said Jack, "let me have my way; I'm an old man now, lad, and haven't so many fancies that I mayn't indulge one, now and again! The business suffer!" he said, in reply to something that Walter had said, "the

business, indeed! You know well enough that the bird-stuffing now is a mere pretext; a mere something that I keep for my 'idle hands to do,' and that it's no necessity, thank the Lord! So let me bide here, lad, and aid in the good work. I think I may be of use among a few of them, yet." And he was right. Not merely was the old man's name known and venerated among the older "hands" as one of the "martyrs of '48," but his quaint caustic tongue made him an immense favourite with the younger men, and soon there were no meetings brought to a close without loud demands for a "bit speech" from Jack Byrne.

Nor was it amongst the farmer and manufacturing classes alone that Mr. Joyce received pledges of support. Several of the neighbouring county gentry and clergy, who had hung back during Mr. Bokenham's candidature, enrolled themselves on the committee of the new comer; and one of his most active adherents was Mr. Benthall. It was not until after due deliberation, and much weighing of pros and cons, that the head-master of Helmingham Grammar School took this step; but he smiled when he had thoroughly made up his mind, and muttered something to himself about its being "a shot for Madam in more ways than one." When he had decided he was by no means underhand in his conduct, but went straight to Mr. Creswell, taking the opportunity of catching him away from home and alone, and told him that the Benthall family had been staunch Liberals for generations; and that, however much he might regret being opposed in politics to a gentleman for whom he entertained such a profound esteem and regard, he could not forswear the family political faith. Mr. Creswell made him a polite reply, and forthwith forgot all about it; and Marian, though she was in the habit of questioning her husband pretty closely at the end of each day as to the progress he had made, looked upon Mr. Benthall's vote as so perfectly secure that she never asked about the matter.

Notwithstanding the favourable reception which he met with everywhere, and the success which seemed invariably to attend him in his canvass, Joyce found it very heavy work. The constant excitement soon began to tell upon him, and the absurdity of the questions sometimes asked, or the pledges occasionally required of him, irritated him so much that he began to inquire of himself whether he was really wise

in going through with the affair, and whether he was not paying a little too dearly even for that revenge for which he had longed, and which was almost within his grasp. His fidelity to the cause to which he had pledged himself would doubtless have caused him to smother these murmurings without any extraneous aid; but just at that time he had an adventure which at once put an end to all doubt on the subject.

One bright wintry morning he arose at the hotel with the determination to take a day's rest from his labours, and to endeavour to recruit himself by a little quiet and fresh air. He had been up late the previous night at a very large meeting of his supporters, the largest as yet gathered together, which he had addressed with even more than wonted effect. He felt that he was speaking more forcibly than usual; he could not tell why, he did not even know what prompted him; but he felt it. It could not have been the presence of the parliamentary agent, Mr. Fyfe, who had come down from London to see how his young friend was getting on, and who was really very much astonished at his young friend's eloquence. Walter Joyce was speaking of the way in which the opposite party had, when in power, broken the pledges they had given, and laughed to scorn the promises they had made when seeking power, and in dilating upon it he used a personal illustration, comparing the voters to a girl who had been jilted and betrayed by her lover, who had been unexpectedly raised to riches. Unconsciously fired by his own experience, he displayed a most forcible and highly-wrought picture of the despair of the girl and the villainy of the man, and roused his audience to a perfect storm of enthusiasm. No one who heard him, as he thought, except Jack Byrne, had the least inkling of his story, or of its effect upon his eloquence; but the "hands" were immensely touched and delighted, and the effect was electrical. Walter went home thoroughly knocked up, and the next morning the reaction had set in. He felt it impossible to attend to business, sent messages to Mr. Fyfe and to Byrne, telling them they must get on without him for the day, and, after a slight breakfast, hurried out of the hotel by the back way. There were always plenty of loafers and idlers hanging round all sides of the house, eager to stare at him, to prefer a petition to him, or to point him out to their friends; but this morning he was

lucky enough to escape them, and, thanks to his knowledge of the locality, to strike upon an unfrequented path, which soon took him clear of the town and brought him to the open fields.

He had forgotten the direction in which the path led, or he would most probably have avoided it and chosen some other, for there lay Helmingham village directly before him. Hitherto he had carefully avoided even looking towards it, but there it was, under his eyes. At some distance it is true, but still sufficiently near for him, with his knowledge of the place, to recognise every outline. There, away on the horizon, was the school-house, there the church; there, dipping down towards the middle of the High-street, the house which had been so long his father's. "What years ago it seemed! There were alterations, too; several newly-built houses, a newly-made road leading, he supposed, to Woolgreaves. Woolgreaves! he could not see the house, he was thankful for that, but he overlooked a portion of the grounds from where he stood, and saw the sun reflected from much sparkling glass, evidently conservatories of recent erection. "She's spending the price for which she sold me!" he muttered to himself.

He crossed a couple of fields, clambered over a hedge, and jumped down into the newly-made road which he had noticed, intending, after pursuing it a short distance, to strike across, leaving Woolgreaves on his right, and make for Helmingham. He could roam about the outskirts of the old place without attracting attention and without any chance of meeting with her. He had gone but a very little way when he heard a sharp, clear, silvery tinkling of little bells, then the noise of horse-hoofs on the hard, dry road, and presently came in sight a little low carriage, drawn by a very perfect pair of iron-grey ponies, and driven by a lady dressed in a sealskin cloak and a coquettish sealskin hat. He knew her in an instant. Marian!

While he was deliberating what to do, whether to remain where he was or jump the hedge and disappear, before he could take any action the pony carriage had neared him, and the ponies were stopped by his side. She had seen him in the distance, and recognised him too; he knew that by the flush that overspread her usually pale face. She was looking bright and well, and far handsomer than he ever remembered her. He had time to notice all that in one glance, before she spoke.

"I am glad of this accidental meeting, Mr. Joyce!" she said, with the slightest tremor in her voice, "for though I had made up my mind to see you I did not see the opportunity."

Walter merely bowed.

"Do you mind walking with me for five minutes? I'll not detain you longer." Walter bowed again. "Thank you, very much. James, follow with the ponies." She stepped out of the carriage with perfect grace and dignity, just touching with the tips of her fingers the arm which Walter, half in spite of himself, held out.

"You will not expect me to act any part in this matter, Mr. Joyce," she said after a moment's pause. "I mean to make no pretence of being astonished at finding you here, in direct opposition to me and mine!"

"No, indeed! that would be time wasted, Mrs. Creswell," said Walter, speaking for the first time. "Opposition to you and yours is surely the thing most likely to be expected in me."

"Exactly! Although at first I scarcely thought you would take the breaking off of our relations in the way you did, I guessed it when you did not write; I knew it of course when you started here, but I was never so certain of your feelings in regard to me as I was last night."

"Last night?"

"Last night! I was present at the Mechanics' Institute, sitting in the gallery with my maid and her brother as escort. I had heard much of your eloquence, and wanted to be convinced. It seems I selected a specially good occasion! You were particularly scathing."

"I spoke what I felt——"

"No doubt! you could not have spoken so without having felt all you described, so that I can completely imagine how you feel towards me. But you are a sensible man, as well as a good speaker, and that is why I have determined to apply to you."

"What do you want, Mrs. Creswell?"

"I want you to go out of this place, Mr. Joyce! to take your name off the walls, and your candidature out of the county! I want you to give up your opposition to my husband. You are too strong for him—you personally; not your cause, but you. We know that; the last three days have convinced everybody of that, and you'll win the election if you stop."

Joyce laughed aloud. "I know I shall," he said, his eyes gleaming.

"What then?" said Marian, quietly.

"Do you know what a poor member of parliament is, 'hanging on' at every one's beck and call, hunted by all, respected by none, not knowing which to serve most as most likely to be able to serve him—would you like to be that, would your pride suffer that? That's all these people want of you—to make you their tool, their party's tool; for you yourself they have not the remotest care. Do you hear?"

"I do. But you have not told me, Mrs. Creswell, what I should get for retiring?"

"Your own terms, Walter Joyce, whatever they were. A competence for life—enough to give you leisure to follow the life in which, as I understand, you have engaged, in ease, when and where you liked. No drudgery, no anxiety, all your own settled on yourself!"

"You are strangely anxious about the result of this election, Mrs. Creswell."

"I am—and I am willing to pay for it!"

Joyce laughed again—a very unpleasant laugh. "My dear Mrs. Creswell," said he, "if government could promise me ten times your husband's fortune to withdraw from this contest, I would refuse! If I had your husband's fortune, I would gladly forfeit it for the chance of winning this election, and defeating you. You will excuse my naming a money value for such pleasure; but I know that hitherto it has been the only one you could understand or appreciate! Good morning!" And he took off his hat, and left her standing in the road.

AS THE CROW FLIES.

DUE EAST. SAFFRON WALDEN AND THAXSTED
TO HARWICH.

It is impossible for our voyaging bird in black to pass over the chalk hills and seven streets of Saffron Walden, which is built on a tongue of land twenty-four miles north-west of Chelmsford, because there exists so curious and interesting a legend about the origin of the singular name of that town. The story is this. Great quantities of saffron for dyers used to be grown in this part of Essex. The first seed or root of this valuable plant was brought from the East by a shrewd pilgrim, concealed, tradition says, in the hollow top of the staff which supported his weary feet, and on which he hung his calabash of water. Lord Braybrook's umbrageous park, with a pleasant wilderness of shade, shadows the approach to Saffron Walden, and girds that stately palace of a house, Audley End, which occupies the site of a Benedictine monastery founded by Mandeville, the first Earl of Essex, "to the honour of St. Mary and St. James," in the year of Grace 1136. At the suppression it was granted to Sir Thomas Audley, who took it as the title

of his barony, and in the time of James the First the Earl of Suffolk erected a many-windowed mansion here which took an army of men thirteen years to put together, and was regarded as the largest residence in the kingdom next to Windsor Castle. A small portion now only remains, and is a mere hut in comparison with the old greatness. The castle at Saffron Walden was built by the same proud Mandeville who built Pleshy.

Not far from Saffron Walden is Thaxsted, a small village, once a borough, rotten even in James the Second's time, and then disfranchised. Here in 1577 was born that laborious and delightful old compiler of voyages, Samuel Purchas. Purchas took his B.D. at Cambridge, where, at St. John's College, he was educated. In 1604 he became vicar of Eastwood, but resided chiefly in London, being also rector of St. Martin's, Ludgate, that vexatious church that keeps getting in a rude and envious way before St. Paul's when one is walking up Ludgate-hill, and longing to get a clear view of the old black giant. The great work of the old London rector was his well-known and valued *Pilgrimages, or Relations of the World*, a collection of voyages, in five volumes folio, a stupendous labour, worthy of a nation of travellers like ourselves. How solemnly and yet humbly he begins his work!

"First, therefore, I beseech Him, that is the First and Last, the Eternal Father, in the name of His beloved and only Sonne, by the light of His holy and all-seeing Spirit, to guide me in this perambulation of the world, and so to take view of the time, places, and customs, therein, as may testify my religious bond to Him, whose I am, and whom I serve, and the service I owe unto His church, of at least this my *mite* [five vols. folio!] may be serviceable to the least of the least therein."

After this fine and religious preamble the old worthy goes steadily on through every country and region of the world—resolute as Drake and as furious a hater of the Spaniards as Raleigh. His chapters on America breathe the old Elizabethan spirit against the Spaniards, and he seems never tired of railing at the enormous cruelties of the conquerors of the New World. In his ninth book on America (chapter fifteen) he says, in a whirlwind of quaint invective:

"I was once present, says Casas, when the inhabitants of the town brought us forth victuals and met us with great kindness, and the Spaniards, without any cause, slew three thousand of them, and twenty-two caciques met us, whom the captain, against all faith, caused to be burned. This made the desperate Indians hang themselves (which two hundred did), and a Spaniard, seeing them take this course, made as though he would hang himself, too, and persecute them even in the region of death, which fear detained some from that self-execution. Six thousand children died in three or four months' space, while I was there, for the want of their parents, who were sent to the mines. From Darien to Nicaragua they slew four hundred thousand people with dogs, swords, fear,

and diverse tortures. The like they did in the kingdom of Venezuela, destroying four or five millions, and out of that continent carried to the islands for slaves, at times, in seventeen years a million of people. But why do I longer trace them in their bloody steps?"

Such was the way in which men wrote who had just heard of the Gunpowder Plot, men who, as children, had seen their mothers' cheeks glow and their fathers' eyes sparkle at the glorious news of the rout of the boastful Armada. It was such cruelties that made the Spaniards hateful to all Europe, that corrupted their nation, that made their climax so brief, that rendered England their deadly and dangerous enemy for nearly a century, and, finally, that left them where they are at present—the last laggards in the race of civilisation.

Manningtree, near Harwich, though a mere small, struggling town on the southern bank of the Stour, is, like Pleshy, a Shakespearian place, being mentioned in Henry the Fourth, where Falstaff is compared, by the mad prince, to "a roasted Manningtree ox, with a pudding in its belly." Manningtree is a place especially connected with one of the most miserable and cruel of old superstitions—the belief in witchcraft. It, indeed, went very hard with all poor, soured, half crazed old women for several centuries, and Essex was especially debased by the irrational persecution. The world had had feverish fits of wild burning, as in Geneva in 1575, when, in three months only, five hundred witches were burnt, or, as in Como, in 1524, when one thousand were burnt in one year. That notorious fool or knave, or both, Matthew Hopkins, "the witch finder," in 1645, hurried to execution about one hundred persons in Essex, Norfolk, and Suffolk. This man pretended to discover the diabolical marks (generally warts) on the old women, by which the devil had marked them for his own. At last, submitting to his own tests, "hoist by his own petard," unlucky and over-zealous Matthew was himself found to be diabolical, and was hung incontinently. Still the miserable fear and folly continued. Even Hale, wise and excellent judge though he was, burnt two unlucky persons for witchcraft in 1664, and in 1676 seventeen or eighteen persons were burnt at St. Osyth's in Essex. In 1716 Mrs. Hicks and her child (nine years old) were hanged at Huntingdon. The last sufferer in Scotland was at Dornach in 1722.

Harwich, a place declining ever since the French war ended with that thunder-clap at Waterloo, stands on a point of land bordered by the sea on the east, and on the north by the estuaries of the Stour and Orwell. The Romans, wishing to guard the Saxon settlements on the south and east coast from fresh German pirates, established a sort of sea patrol or coastguard, under the command of "the honourable count of the Saxon shore," whose jurisdiction reached from Aldrington in Sussex to Brancaster in Norfolk. The Saxons in their turn continued the same patrol, and this town obtained its name from their camp, "Here-wich"

(the town of the army). The Romans have left traces here, for there is still a Roman paved road leading to the town, and a camp with ramparts and fosse reaching from the south side of the town to Beacon Hill Field. In 855 King Alfred broke up the Danish piratical fleet at the broad mouth of the Orwell and captured every vessel. After the Norman invasion, and the decay of the older town of Orwell, which stood on a spot now a shoal five miles from the shore, Harwich became a place of importance and a favourite spot of embarkation for Holland and Flanders. In September, 1326, Isabella, queen of Edward the Second, landed at Harwich, with seven hundred and fifty Hainaulters, her son the prince, and her paramour, Roger Mortimer. Here, joined by three bishops, and the Earls of Kent and Norfolk, she marched against her husband and his evil counsellors. A year from that day the weak king was cruelly put to death in the vaulted room at Berkeley. In 1338 Edward the Third sailed from Harwich with five hundred blazoned, gilded, and turreted vessels for his first campaign against France. In the following year eleven French galleys, "willing to wound and yet afraid to strike," hovered menacingly round the mouth of the Orwell, but did not venture within reach of our cross-bow bolts and arrows. In 1340, Edward the Third set sail again from Harwich on Midsummer Eve, took half the enemy's ships, and made many prisoners. In due time Henry the Eighth, Queen Elizabeth, and Charles the Second visited the town. William the Third chose Harwich as his point of departure for Holland, and George the First and Second started joyfully from this same Essex town, which modern travellers have malignantly branded as dull.

On September 6th, 1761, the great but heavy Lord Anson arrived at Harwich from Cuxhaven with the Princess Charlotte, of Mecklenburgh Strelitz, the destined bride of the young King George. They had been a week at sea. She remained all the Sunday on board the royal yacht in Harwich Roads, landed late on the Monday, was welcomed by the authorities in the usual respectful and tiresome manner, and then posted on to Colchester, where Mr. Green, a private gentleman, gave her tea, and a native of the place presented her with a box of candied eringo root. Lord Harcourt, the king's representative, describes the Princess as full of good sense, vivacity, and cheerfulness, no regular beauty, but a good figure, with a charming complexion, and very pretty eyes. The Princess entered London by Whitechapel, wearing a fly cap with lace lappets, a diamond spangled stomacher, and a gold brocade suit of clothes with a white ground.

In 1764, four years after the ascent of George the Third, Charles William Frederick, Prince of Brunswick, landed at Harwich, on his way to claim the hand of the young king's sister, the Princess Augusta. The new queen (Charlotte) had a small German jealousy of Brunswick. The prince was a knightly, ugly

man, addicted to gallantry. The good people of Harwich nearly pulled down his lodgings in their eagerness to see him. Even the Quakers went slightly crazed; one Friend, indeed, actually forced his way in, doffed his hat, in defiance of old Penn, kissed the prince's hand, declared that though on principle he did not fight himself, he liked those who could, blessed him, and departed. The marriage rites were so jealously restricted, that not even a congratulatory salute was fired. The bridal pair supped humbly at Leicester House, and the prince was driven to court the Opposition—foolish Newcastle, heroic Chatham, and the butcher Duke of Cumberland. At Brunswick the couple were welcomed on their return by the Countess of Yarmouth, the ugly mistress of George the Second, the bride's grandfather. So much for German propriety!

On August 16th, 1821, H.M.S. Glasgow sailed from Harwich with the dead body of the imprudent and unhappy Queen Caroline. It was a singular fact that the naval officer who was charged to carry back the queen's body was the same man who from the main chains of the Jupiter (fifty-gun ship) had handed her a rope when she embarked in the Elbe, a hopeful, reckless, and happy bride-elect, twenty-nine years before. That cruel scene at the coronation killed her. She had claimed to be crowned, or at least to share in the ceremonial. The Privy Council of course decided against her, in spite of even the eloquence and subtlety of Brougham. She was repulsed at every door by the half-frightened constables, grenadiers, and door-keepers. That cruel and unfortunate ceremony took place on the 19th of July. On the 7th of August, the poor, foolish, high-spirited woman, died broken-hearted at Hammersmith. How could the marriage have been expected to be happy? Caroline was the daughter of a foolish frivolous woman, and of a brave, handsome, vicious man. She grew up smart, clever, thoughtless, and imprudent. She arrived in England a romping, coarse, vulgar, dirty German woman, the first approach of whom drove the prince to instantly ask Lord Harris for some brandy. The Regent was already married, and had been in love with the most beautiful and accomplished women in England. The polished scoundrel! he had promised Mrs. Fitzherbert ten thousand pounds a year, and had just settled her in splendid infamy in a mansion in Park-lane! On his very first visit to the punctilious, snuffy, dull, dreary old court at Windsor, he took down the pretty, pouting, spiteful Lady Jersey with his bride. The prince had only married this wilful German frau in order to get money to pay his enormous debts, which included such items as forty thousand pounds to his farrier, and fourteen hundred pounds a year to Mrs. Crouch, the actress, one of his innumerable ex-mistresses. The husband and wife hated each other at the first sight, and the more they knew of each other, the more just and the more virulent the hatred became. After the disgraceful marriage, at which the prince was so

drunk that he had to be propped up by two of his affectionate and equally respectable brothers, there was a dismal supper at Buckingham House, and at midnight the happy pair drove off to Carlton House, wrangling with each other by the way, so at least court rumour said. Poor, poor woman!

Her funeral procession to Harwich was troublous and disgraceful! The King by Divine Right was just starting to glorify Ireland, and settle everything there by a flying visit. Lord Liverpool, determined there should be no exhibition of popular enthusiasm for the crushed and tortured woman, ordered an escort of cavalry to accompany the body at once to Harwich, in spite of the remonstrances and entreaties of Lady Hood, Lord Hood, and Alderman Wood. The London mayor and corporation wished to carry the corpse with all civic honours through the city. Lord Liverpool, in his small, timid, mean way, resolved to smuggle it by the New Road to Romford and to Harwich, or else by water direct; but he was afraid of a riot at London-bridge. On the 14th of August—a wet and stormy day—the miserable, tawdry procession set out. At Kensington church the cavalry tried to sidle off towards Bayswater. Then the city went mad, a barricade was instantly thrown up, and, in spite of the Life Guards, the cortège was hurried on by force towards the city. At Hyde Park-gate and Park-lane there were fresh outbreaks. At the corner of Edgeware-road the Life Guards, losing their temper, fired at the people, wounded several, and shot two men dead. At Tottenham-court-road, however, the people, passively stubborn, forced the procession down Drury-lane into the Strand. After the riot had lasted seven hours, the people shook London with their shouts of triumph. The civic authorities accompanied the heedless corpse as far as Whitechapel, the eastern limit of the city "liberties." At Romford the mourners passed the night, but the royal corpse was sent on, and rested in St. Peter's church, Colchester. During the night a silver plate, describing the deceased as "the injured" or "the murdered queen of England" was affixed to the coffin-lid, but afterwards removed. At Harwich seven vessels awaited the body; the coffin was carelessly swung into a barge, the squadron set sail under a salute from Landguard Fort, and passed straight to Cuxhaven. At Brunswick some hundreds of the citizens drew the funeral car to the cathedral gates. The unhappy and unfortunate woman lies, says Dr. Doran, in the cathedral of St. Blaize, between two heroes—her old father, who fell fighting at Jena for ungrateful Prussia; and her brother, who, at the head of the savage Black Brunswickers, fell avenging him at Waterloo.

Harwich has so fine a harbour that it is said that one hundred sail of the line and four hundred sail of colliers could anchor there together at the same time. Yet in spite of the two lighthouses, warning vessels from the shoal of the West Rocks, the navigation requires a pilot. Still, somehow or another, the

commerce and traffic have decreased since the French war ended, and Harwich will some day, unless it looks out sharper, become as Orwell, over whose decay it once triumphed. No one, nevertheless, can yet crow over Harwich, for it still boasts one hundred vessels and a considerable fleet of wherries that ply to Manningtree and Ipswich. In the Harwich docks seventy-four gun ships have been built. The harbour has a fine opening, is deep and generous, and is, and probably always will be, the only safe sheltering roadstead between Yarmouth and the Thames, although Lowestoft is a dangerous rival, and Yarmouth is more convenient for Holland, Germany, and Sweden. Now the garrison and government works are gone, Harwich shows signs of age. Its ruin began in its own greediness as early as 1742, when the townspeople and innkeepers were so rapacious with strangers from Holland and Germany that sloops were started to go direct between London and Holland; it was just the same short-sighted greediness, in the latter case for dock dues, that ruined Bristol irreparably, and made Liverpool.

There was a day when old Burleigh shook his wise head over a chart of our east coast, and said, in his sententious way, "Harwich must be fortified against the Spaniard." Sure enough in 1625 a Spanish fleet did swoop round Harwich, and rather scared the marsh people. In Queen Anne's time the town was fortified against the sailors of Louis Quatorze. The blockhouses have now disappeared, and so have the ancient gates, St. Austin, Barton's or the Watergate, Castle Gate, and St. Helen's Port; but there is Landguard Fort, built by James the First on the Suffolk Point still, with its twenty heavy traversing guns, to protect the passage from the sea.

THE UNIVERSE.

SOME readers may be inclined to think it an act of presumption to attempt to treat so vast a topic as the constitution of the universe in a slight sketch comprised in one short paper. It would be so were the universe a chaos, a heterogeneous medley, a system of independent and uncurbed anarchies. But the universe, on the contrary, is symmetry, order, law. The most recent discoveries of science tend to prove that the universe is one, a unity, made up of like co-ordinate parts, and of similar when not identical materials.

It has been often said that the mind of man is incapable of comprehending the infinite. This may be true in a certain sense, because we may entertain reasonable doubts whether we really and fully understand *anything*. But for my own part, as far as the visible universe is concerned, I feel much less difficulty in comprehending its infinity than in conceiving that it can possibly be finite.

As to space: Can we by any effort imagine the existence of a boundary, a blank wall, an impassable limit, where there is no further ex-

tension of space? Where a winged messenger or angel, sent on the errand of penetrating deeper into space, would have to turn back because there was no more space to penetrate? No; we cannot figure to ourselves such a final limit to the extent of the universe, such a ring-fence enclosing all things created. It is far easier both to grant and to understand that space *must* be infinitely extensible.

Then again, as to time: We cannot conceive its actual stoppage. The events by which we measure time, the motions of the heavenly bodies might alter, nay, might even cease; the planets might all fall into the sun, suns might coalesce or group together, making new heavens and new earths, still there would be a change, a progress, which is only another mode and manifestation of time. Even supposing (what is impossible to suppose) that no more motion or event took place in the universe—that the great All were still, stagnant, and dead—time nevertheless, that is to say eternity, would not cease. Immortal beings would yet possess and enjoy an everlasting now of life and happiness. Here also we can more readily admit the infinite than conceive the finite.

We have now a clear and comprehensive knowledge of what, to our forefathers, was impenetrable mystery. The early inhabitants of the earth would naturally take it to be a flat surface spread out in all directions. The sun, moon, and stars would be simple luminaries hung in the heavens for their convenience to afford them light. Travel might teach them that this flat surface was considerably larger than they at first suspected; but a moment's reflection must soon convince them that it could not extend in all directions *indefinitely*. They would witness regularly, every day, the sun rising on one side of the earth and setting on the opposite side; and, moreover, not rising and setting at the same points of the horizon for an observer stationed at one and the same spot. At one season the point of emergence would advance, day by day, towards the north; at another time of the year it would gradually shift towards the south. The sun's setting would present exactly similar circumstances. The same of the risings and settings of the moon. A great number of the stars would be observed to rise and set in the east and the west, like the sun and the moon, with the difference that each star would rise and set always at the same points of the horizon, if observed from the same spot on the earth's surface.

Now, no doubt could be entertained that the heavenly bodies which reappeared daily by rising in the east, were the same bodies which had previously disappeared by setting in the west. They must therefore have passed either *beneath* the earth or *through* it, during the interval of time between their setting and their rising. The latter alternative being impossible, it followed, as a necessary consequence, that the earth could not spread, in the direction of the horizon, as far as the stars. There *must* be a free passage, all round the

earth, allowing the heavenly bodies to make their daily peregrinations. The earth's extent once admitted to be limited, the idea of its roundness would soon come to explain it; and, little by little, the earth came to be acknowledged as a globe suspended in space, and resting on nothing.

After this first grand step, it was remarked that the other heavenly bodies are also globes whose real distances from us are enormously greater than had been supposed. Gradually, the truth was forced on men's minds that the terrestrial sphere, so vast in respect to us, is excessively small compared with most of the stars which spangle the firmament. Instead of being the centre of the universe, for whose benefit all the rest had been created, it is reduced to the rank of a mere planet, one of a numerous family, all regularly revolving round the sun. Moreover, the conditions in which the planets exist and the circumstances noticeable on their surfaces, show that some of them at least may be inhabited, as well as the earth.

Furthermore, the stars which twinkle in every part of the firmament, are neither more nor less than suns, of different dimensions, amongst which *our* sun is certainly not the largest. It is more than probable that each of these suns is accompanied by a system of planets revolving round him. Planets are the most reasonable explanation of the phenomena of variable stars; the most celebrated of which is Algol, or the star β of the constellation Perseus, whose period of variation is extremely regular. For two days and fourteen hours it maintains without diminution its greatest degree of brightness, which is followed by a gradual weakening of its light, and then by an equally gradual increase of the same, the whole of those changes taking place in a little less than seven hours. It is believed that there is no actual difference in the quantity of light emitted by the star itself, but that some opaque body, such as a very large planet, by revolving round the star at a short distance from it, screens its light by passing before it, and so causing a considerable eclipse. This supposition accords with the regularity of the phenomenon, and with the short duration of the partial obscurity relative to the total duration of the period of brightness.

Each fixed star being accompanied by planets, it is a natural inference that some of them may be inhabited, as are some of the planets belonging to our own solar system. The distances of these stars from each other are immense. The dimensions of our solar system are as nothing in comparison; and, in the solar system itself, the earth, which appeared so vast at the outset, is now known to be a mere point, a tiny speck.

Spectral analysis has been mentioned more than once in these pages, we therefore do not now repeat what has been stated before. It is enough to say, that it is a recently-discovered mode of investigating the composition of bodies, by examining the light they emit while burning or at very high temperatures. Now, without entering into further detail, it is found

that the heavenly bodies contain substances exactly the same as those which make up the solid crust of the earth. Those bodies may include elementary substances which we have not; we have some whose presence has not yet been ascertained in certain stars; but, when it is found that the sun contains iron in plenty, besides barium, copper, and zinc in small quantities; that Aldebaran (the star marked α in the Bull) has soda, magnesia, hydrogen, lime, iron, bismuth, tellurium, antimony, and mercury; that Sirius, the brilliant Dog Star, likewise confesses to soda, magnesia, hydrogen, and probably iron; and that many others, not only of the stars but of the nebulae, have been made to avow their possession of similar, if not exactly identical, elements—would it not be the merest quibble to deny that the universe is One in material constitution?

The mass and volume of a thing, being attested by the force it exercises, may be taken as positive qualities; but its *magnitude* is quite relative. Men are colossi for the emmet, puny dwarfs for the elephant, lilliputian pigmies for the whale. There is a curious but inseparable relation between apparent size and actual distance. By a strange illusion of our senses, the appearance which any object presents depends both upon its actual size and on the space intervening between it and us. If we can neither touch an object nor get at it in any way, its actual distance remains unknown, and we are liable to make the most erroneous estimate of its real dimensions. At first sight the sun and moon appear very small compared with the earth, while the stars might pass for jets of gas, like those used in illuminating public buildings. This illusion gave rise to the once-current opinion that the sun is not bigger than a barrel, and caused the ancient Greeks to be laughed at for asserting him to be as large as the Peloponnesus, the modern Crimea.

But it happens that appreciable size varies inversely as the distance. The further off a thing is, the smaller it appears to our senses; and vice versa. The rule holds good with the smallest perceptible objects as well as with the greatest. The microscope gives us the view of an object which would be seen by a properly constituted eye beholding it from the distance of its object-glass. It gives us a nearer view, a closer insight, of what we wish to inspect, and so *magnifies* it. And were our faculties not limited, we should doubtless find, upon still closer inspection, that even the elementary atoms of which all bodies are composed have *size*—even the particles composing air and the very lightest known substance, hydrogen gas.

The relation between distance and magnitude is daily forced upon our notice, although we may be slow to draw from it one inference touching the constitution of the universe, namely, that *all* is small and *all* is great. It is true that the adult, as well as the child, may say,

Twinkle, twinkle, little star!
How I wonder what you are,
Up above the world so high,
Like a diamond in the sky!

because the variation of the distance between us and the stars is so infinitesimal in amount, compared with their enormous distance, that for us they are *always* little; but with terrestrial objects, this is not the case. On climbing the slope of a lofty mountain, our fellow-creatures, seen on the plain below, soon show "scarce so big as beetles," then as mites, and finally become invisible animalcules. We restore to them a portion of their original size, and render them visible, by drawing them nearer to us with the telescope. Thus the telescope is the microscope of large distant things, while the microscope is the telescope of small things in too close approximation for their parts to be perceptible by our limited organs. It shows and proves that between their parts there are intervals which would otherwise escape our observation and cognisance; that what we think to be contiguous and continuous, is really separate and broken up into parts. The telescope extends our range of vision outwards, the microscope enables it to plunge deeper inwards.

The intervals between the ultimate particles of bodies will probably ever remain beyond our ken and measurement, visible only to the eye of the mind. Some philosophers have held that the distances which separate the atoms constituting solid bodies, are as great, relatively to their actual size, as those from one fixed star to another. That the atoms of which everything—gas, liquid, or solid—is made up are not contiguous, and do not absolutely touch each other, is proved by their expansion and contraction under heat and cold. A favoured hypothesis maintains that those atoms revolve round each other, like the heavenly bodies, and that their revolutions are made perceptible to us by the sensations of warmth or chilliness, as the case may be.

Dr. Tyndall, to explain the heating of a lump of lead by the blows of a sledge-hammer, says, "The motion of the mass, *as a whole*, is transformed into a motion of the *molecules* of the mass. This motion of heat, however, though intense, is executed within limits too minute, and the moving particles are too small, to be visible. Here the imagination must help us. In the case of solid bodies, while the force of cohesion still holds the molecules together, you must conceive a power of vibration, with certain limits, to be possessed by the molecules. You must suppose them oscillating to and fro; and the greater the amount of heat we impart to the body, or the greater the amount of mechanical action which we invest in it by percussion, compression, or friction, the more rapid will be the molecular vibration, and the wider the amplitude of the atomic oscillations." Now, if the vibration describes a long ellipse, like the dance of a gnat in the air, it becomes precisely the orbit of a revolving comet which remains in attendance on its sun, instead of wandering from system to system.

If this be true—and Dr. Tyndall adds, "the *molecules have been thought by some*, notably

by Sir Humphry Davy, to *revolve* round each other, and the communication of heat, by augmenting their centrifugal force, is supposed to push them more widely asunder;"—if this be true, there is a complete analogy between the smallest and the greatest of created things. An iron-filing, a drop of oil, a bubble of air, are galaxies of atoms, obeying the laws of their mutual attractions and repulsions; while the stars we call fixed, are only the atoms composing some great whole whose form and contour are beyond the scope of our vision. And thus, whether we look outwardly, to reach the infinitely great, or inwardly, to penetrate the infinitely small, the prospect that meets us is alike, differing only in magnitude. And we may repeat that both in its mechanical and its material constitution, the universe is one—a unity.

THE WRECK OFF CALAIS.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 4, 1866.

THE waves broke over the harbour light,
The women ran, screaming, along the pier,
The wind like a wild beast howled; the night
Grew darker as, with a shudder of fear,
We saw just then, by the flash and flare
A hissing rocket a moment cast,
A tossing wreck swept almost bare,
Aye! the cruel end it was coming fast!

A few more blows from the breaking sea,
A few more surges of angry wave,
And a floating spar and a plank would be
All that was left. Was there none to save?
None to struggle with surf and tide,
And the foaming hell of the angry flood,
That raved and raged with a devilish pride,
Howling, as 'twere, for human blood?

'Twas a little brig of St. Nazaire,
That wrestled with Satan at sea that night;
And the steady lighthouse flame fell there
On the women's faces, wan and white;
The children sobbed, and the mothers wept,
Hearing the sailors' screaming cries,
As the torchlight fell on the waves that leapt,
And gleamed on the staring and sorrowing eyes.

And then we could see the savage rush
Of the wolfish waves as they bore along,
And swept o'er the wreck with a ravening crush.
Then the moon shone out from the gloom bygone,
And up in the rigging dark there showed,
Bound to the ropes, five half-drowned men.
And one poor boy, who a spar bestrode
Till a breaker bore him into its den.

No brave man's heart could bear that cry,
As below, on the moonlit level sands,
The women knelt in their agony,
And wrung their tight-clasped pallid hands.
The moon was full, but its tranquil light
Lent only a terror to the snow,
And a horror and fear to the rolling surge,
And the restless mighty seethe and flow.

Then we English fellows, with cheer and shout,
Ran eagerly down to the further sand,
And dragged the life-boat quickly out
Not one of us lads but bore a hand.
'Twas bedded deep in the silt and snow,
And the drift was round it high and fast;
But we dragged it steadily, though slow,
Till the deeper water was reached at last.

But just as we launched a sour-faced man
Came tow'ards us, biting his lips, and bade
The noisy Frenchmen, who after him ran,
"Pull out at once." Well, they were afraid;
Still they tumbled in in their bragging way,
Shouting their gibberish loud enough,
But half way came a wave at play,
And the lubbers were not of a right good stuff.

So they turned, and left the men to drown;
Then we went mad at that, and raced
For the boat at the other end of the town;
And we ferried across, but the fools, disgraced,
Would not bring the key, and were sullen and glum.
So we tore down the rails, which did quite as well,
And launched the boat, and were cool and dumb,
Till we pulled away for that foaming hell.

How loud they cheered from the pier and sands
As we shot like a sea bird to the wreck;
Our hearts were good, but how weak our hands;
Waves do not yield to a coxswain's beck.
A cruel sea struck our staggering boat,
A moment, and half of us had gone,
And I and some others, on oars aloft,
Saw the careless wave roll roaring on.

But English are English, come what may;
And life to them is a paltry thing
Compared with duty; so quickly they
Pushed off while we were still struggling;
And rescuing all that were left, again
They pulled through the racing rolling tide,
And saved the last Frenchman, whose worn weak
brain
Had turned when his friends had slowly died.

And the Sunday morning, when all was calm,
Our steam-boat left with the five dead men,
And half way across we sang a psalm
Beside the row of coffins, and then
The captain read us a chapter or two,
Till presently up the white cliffs came;
But not for them, the brave and true,
Who put the Calais men to shame.

NEW UNCOMMERCIAL SAMPLES.

By CHARLES DICKENS.

A PLEA FOR TOTAL ABSTINENCE.

ONE day this last Whitsuntide, at precisely eleven o'clock in the forenoon, there suddenly rode into the field of view commanded by the windows of my lodging, an equestrian phenomenon. It was a fellow-creature on horseback, dressed in the absurd manner. The fellow-creature wore high boots, some other (and much larger) fellow-creature's breeches, of a slack-baked doughy colour and a baggy form, a blue shirt whereof the skirt or tail was puffily tucked into the waistband of the said breeches, no coat, a red shoulder-belt, and a demi-semi-military scarlet hat with a feathered ornament in front, which to the uninstructed human vision had the appearance of a moulting shuttlecock. I laid down the newspaper with which I had been occupied, and surveyed the fellow-man in question, with astonishment. Whether he had been sitting to any painter as a frontispiece for a new edition of

Sartor Resartus; whether "the husk or shell of him," as the esteemed Herr Tensfeldt might put it, were founded on a jockey, on a circus, on General Garibaldi, on cheap porcelain, on a toy-shop, on Guy Fawkes, on Wax-Work, on Gold Digging, on Bedlam, or on all, were doubts that greatly exercised my mind. Meanwhile my fellow-man stumbled and slid, excessively against his will, on the slippery stones of my Covent Garden street, and elicited shrieks from several sympathetic females, by convulsively restraining himself from pitching over his horse's head. In the very crisis of these evolutions, and indeed at the trying moment when his charger's tail was in a tobacconist's shop, and his head anywhere about town, this cavalier was joined by two similar portents, who, likewise stumbling and sliding, caused him to stumble and slide the more distressingly. At length this Gilpinian triumvirate effected a halt, and, looking northward, waved their three right hands as commanding unseen troops to Up guards and at 'em. Hereupon a brazen band burst forth, which caused them to be instantly bolted with to some remote spot of earth in the direction of the Surrey Hills.

Judging from these appearances that a procession was under way, I threw up my window, and, craning out, had the satisfaction of beholding it advancing along the street. It was a Tee-Total procession, as I learnt from its banners, and was long enough to consume twenty minutes in passing. There were a great number of children in it, some of them so very young in their mothers' arms as to be in the act of practically exemplifying their abstinence from fermented liquors, and attachment to an unintoxicating drink, while the procession defiled. The display was, on the whole, pleasant to see, as any good-humoured holiday assemblage of clean, cheerful, and well-conducted people should be. It was bright with ribbons, tinsel, and shoulder-belts, and abounded in flowers, as if those latter trophies had come up in profusion under much watering. The day being breezy, the insubordination of the large banners was very reprehensible. Each of these, being borne aloft on two poles and stayed with some half dozen lines, was carried, as polite books in the last century used to be written, by "various hands," and the anxiety expressed in the upturned faces of those officers—something between the anxiety attendant on the balancing art, and that inseparable from the

pastime of kite flying, with a touch of the angler's quality in landing his scaly prey—much impressed me. Suddenly, too, a banner would shiver in the wind, and go about in the most inconvenient manner. This always happened oftenest with such gorgeous standards as those representing a gentleman in black, corpulent with tea and water, in the laudable act of summarily reforming a family feeble and pinched with beer. The gentleman in black distended by wind would then conduct himself with the most unbecoming levity, while the beery family, growing beerier, would frantically try to tear themselves away from his ministration. Some of the inscriptions accompanying the banners were of a highly determined character, as "We never, never, will give up the temperance cause:" with similar sound resolutions, rather suggestive to the profane mind of Mrs. Micawber's "I never will desert Mr. Micawber," and of Mr. Micawber's retort, "Really, my dear, I am not aware that you were ever required by any human being to do anything of the sort."

At intervals a gloom would fall on the passing members of the procession, for which I was at first unable to account. But this I discovered, after a little observation, to be occasioned by the coming-on of the Executioners—the terrible official Beings who were to make the speeches bye-and-bye—who were distributed in open carriages at various points of the cavalcade. A dark cloud and a sensation of dampness, as from many wet blankets, invariably preceded the rolling on of the dreadful cars containing these Headsmen, and I noticed that the wretched people who closely followed them, and who were in a manner forced to contemplate their folded arms, complacent countenances, and threatening lips, were more overshadowed by the cloud and damp than those in front. Indeed, I perceived in some of these so moody an implacability towards the magnates of the scaffold, and so plain a desire to tear them limb from limb, that I would respectfully suggest to the managers the expediency of conveying the Executioners to the scene of their dismal labours by unfrequented ways, and in closely tilted cars, next Whitsuntide.

The Procession was composed of a series of smaller processions which had come together, each from its own metropolitan district. An infusion of Allegory became perceptible when patriotic Peckham advanced. So I judged, from the circumstance of Peck-

ham's unfurling a silken banner that fanned Heaven and Earth with the words "The Peckham Life Boat." No Boat being in attendance, though Life, in the likeness of "a gallant, gallant, crew" in nautical uniform followed the flag, I was led to meditate on the fact that Peckham is described by Geographers as an inland settlement with no larger or nearer shore-line than the towing-path of the Surrey Canal, on which stormy station I had been given to understand no Life Boat exists. Thus I deduced an allegorical meaning, and came to the conclusion that if patriotic Peckham picked a peck of pickled poetry, this was the peck of pickled poetry which patriotic Peckham picked.

I have observed that the aggregate Procession was on the whole pleasant to see. I made use of that qualified expression with a direct meaning which I will now explain. It involves the title of this paper, and a little fair trying of Tee-Totalism by its own tests.

There were many people on foot, and many people in vehicles of various kinds. The former were pleasant to see, and the latter were not pleasant to see: for the reason that I never, on any occasion or under any circumstances, have beheld heavier overloading of horses than in this public show. Unless the imposition of a great van laden with from ten to twenty people on a single horse be a moderate tasking of the poor creature, then the Temperate use of horses was immoderate and cruel. From the smallest and lightest horse to the largest and heaviest, there were many instances in which the beast of burden was so shamefully overladen, that the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals has frequently interposed in less gross cases.

Now, I have always held that there may be, and that there unquestionably is, such a thing as Use without Abuse, and that therefore the Total Abolitionists are irrational and wrong-headed. But the Procession completely converted me. For, so large a number of the people using draught-horses in it were clearly unable to Use them without Abusing them, that I perceived Total Abstinence from Horseflesh to be the only remedy of which the case admitted. As it is all one to Tee-Totallers whether you take half a pint of beer or half a gallon, so it was all one here whether the beast of burden were a pony or a cart-horse. Indeed, my case had the special strength that the half-pint quadruped underwent as much suffering as the half-gallon quadru-

ped. Moral : Total Abstinence from Horseflesh through the whole length and breadth of the scale. This Pledge will be in course of administration to all Tee-Total processionists, not pedestrians, at the publishing office of ALL THE YEAR ROUND, on the first day of April, One Thousand Eight Hundred and Seventy.

Observe a point for consideration. This Procession comprised many persons, in their gigs, broughams, tax-carts, barouches, chaises, and what not, who were merciful to the dumb beasts that drew them, and did not overcharge their strength. What is to be done with those unoffending persons? I will not run amuck and vilify and defame them, as Tee-Total tracts and platforms would most assuredly do, if the question were one of drinking instead of driving; I merely ask what is to be done with them? The reply admits of no dispute whatever. Manifestly, in strict accordance with Tee-Total Doctrines, THEY must come in too, and take the Total Abstinence from Horseflesh Pledge. It is not pretended that those members of the Procession misused certain auxiliaries which in most countries and all ages have been bestowed upon man for his use, but it is undeniable that other members of the Procession did. Tee-Total mathematics demonstrate that the less includes the greater; that the guilty include the innocent, the blind the seeing, the deaf the hearing, the dumb the speaking, the drunken the sober. If any of the moderate users of draught-cattle in question should deem that there is any gentle violence done to their reason by these elements of logic, they are invited to come out of the Procession next Whitsuntide, and look at it from my window.

LOST AND FOUND IN THE SNOW.

HIGH up, below the summit of the Brocken, chief of the Harz mountains, is a flat moorland, the Brockenfeld, wild, dreary, far from men. The nearest town belongs to the miners of Andreasberg, three hours distant, and the weather is not often friendly to much intercourse. The air of the Brockenfeld is nearly always cold, the trees are stunted and overgrown with a long greylichen, which apparently protects them from the wintry blast, and looks like the beard of an old man. No flowery fields are here; no corn, not even potatoes, will thrive in this dreary home of cold weather, starved and deformed trees, long damp moss, reeds, and sedges.

Only a rare wanderer passes this way, or an emigrant trading in canary-birds, which are largely bred among the miners, and brought down to Harzburg, thence to be despatched over Europe

in the tiny wicker cages we often see them sold in. Or perchance in the height of summer visitors from Harzburg, who are using the saline baths there, or consumptive patients from the fir-needle cure of Andreasberg, will drive to the Brockenfeld to see the famous Rehberger Graben. Such visitors put up and dine at the forester's house, the only habitation in this district.

It was occupied some years ago by Paul Smitt, whose post was a tolerably lucrative one, the Hanoverian government having made some amends in payment for the lone position. But even the good pay tempted few to accept the situation.

When it was offered to Paul he accepted it eagerly. It was the very spot for him. He was a tall, sturdy, fine-looking man, his handsome face bronzed with long exposure to the wind and weather; only when he lifted his sugar-loaf shaped green huntsman's hat was there a bit of fair skin visible along the top of his forehead. His quiet blue eyes lay deep in his head, shaded by somewhat overhanging brows which gave a stern appearance to his face. He had always been grave; as a boy he had not mixed in the sports of his companions, but kept aloof and apart from them to study his forester's craft. He loved his profession for its own sake, but there had been a time when he had loved it also for the sake of another, hoping by steady work sooner to bring about the doubling of his happiness. He had served his apprenticeship under a lowland forester, who encouraged and loved the studious youth, and did not see with any dissatisfaction that he worked harder after the forester's pretty daughter, Beatrice, came from her city boarding-school. Old Emil Bergen was glad to think that a young man he liked so much might become his son-in-law, and relieve him of all further care for his one motherless child. He therefore brought the young people as much together as he could, and once when a ticklish matter had to be reported down in the town, instead of going himself, he sent Paul, thus putting him in the way for promotion.

It was then, before he left for the town, that Paul spoke his mind to Beatrice. He had been working in the wood all the afternoon looking after the welfare of a young spruce nursery, when she passed him with a bunch of wood camellias in her hand.

"Oh, Paul," she said, seeing him, "look how many of these I have found. They are my favourite flowers, I love their simplicity; they thrive in out-of-the-way places; they are not ambitious" she added with a smile. "Not like you, Paul."

"Do you dislike my ambition?"

"Oh no, but you sit evening after evening over your books, studying how to improve your position in the world, and I think you might have given us more of your company."

"And for whom do you think I work so hard?" he asked, looking straight into her face.

"How should I know?" she said, saucily, though she blushed and looked down.

"Do you care to know?" he resumed, and as

he spoke he advanced a step nearer her and took the hand that hung listless by her side; the other held the flowers in which she was now burying her blushing face. She knew what was coming; she dreaded it, she longed for it, she seemed rooted to the spot as by some magic spell. She neither spoke nor stirred.

"Beatrice, I love you. I wished to work to make a position for myself in which my wife could live at ease as she had been used to do at home. I did not feel it honourable to take a girl from a good home to offer her a less comfortable one. You led me on just now, or it would not have been till I had house and range to call my own that I would have stepped to you and said, Beatrice, I love you. Will you be my wife? But as it is, it is; and if you can give me only a hope, Beatrice—"

She did not answer him one tiny word. Her head was only buried deeper in the flowers, but she did not resist him either when he drew her closer to him, when he held her in his strong embrace, and pressed a kiss on her bowed head.

"Say one word to me, Beatrice," he pleaded; "one word."

"I love you, Paul," she stammered. And then hastily broke away from him, and ran into the house.

A week after this the young man left for the town, where he stayed three months, and at the end of that time, was appointed to a station twelve miles distant from his love. Though it divided them, it made him glad, for would it not soon bring them together? It was not an advancement he could marry on, but it was the intermediate step to such promotion, and he was pleased to have got so far. Before departing for his new home, he went once more to say farewell to his old one, and to take away his few possessions. All was as he had left it, except Beatrice, and she seemed changed, how he could hardly say.

There was a shyness and distance about her manner towards himself that pained him; she had more the behaviour of a lady than those simple girlish ways he had delighted in before. When he dropped any hint of this to her father he pooh-poohed it. "Why, Paul," he said, "the maid must change into the woman, and thought of approaching matrimony sobers every girl. These are cobwebs of the brain, boy, shake them off, they are not worthy of her or of you."

Paul left the old Forsthaus with an anxious heart. But youth is so trustful and love so desirous to believe what it hopes, that the cheerful, friendly letters he received fortnightly from kind old Emil Bergen, full of news and messages from Beatrice, dispelled his doubts and fears. The young man worked on as steadily as ever.

But one August morning he received two letters. One was written in the stiff handwriting of his old master, the other sealed with the huge governmental seal. He hastily broke the latter for he thought it might directly concern the attainment of his aim in life; nor was he mistaken. The writing offered to Paul Smitt,

Förster, the Forsterei of Oderbruck on the Brockenfeld, with a good income and certain privileges in consideration of its lonely position.

Can I take Beatrice there? was his first thought. Will it be right thus to bury her alive. For himself he had no thought; wherever she was there was life enough for him.

While thus considering, he opened the other letter. His eyes flew over the pages, and as he read his face grew hard and sad. When he had come to the end he crunched the letter wildly in his hand, threw it far from him, and tottering into a chair burst into tears.

The letter that had changed the whole current of Paul's being ran thus:

"MY WELL LOVED PAUL,—How shall I find words in which to clothe my grief—our grief—for it is yours as well as mine, my boy? Beatrice is ours no longer; yesterday she left her father's home to follow the young squire of V—. All I can learn is that the gentleman has met her much lately in the wood, that they went away together, and were last seen near G—. I shall not attempt to follow her, to try and bring her back. She can be my daughter no longer. To deceive her doting old father and affianced husband; no, Paul, to forgive her, is more than I can do. But you, my boy, you must remain my son, as such I have always loved you. Come to see me as soon as you can leave; my eyes long to behold you, my ears to hear your voice. We will grieve together for our darling. Come to your affectionate fosterfather,

"EMIL BERGEN."

Paul accepted the governmental offer. What place could be too lonely for him now? What place lonely enough wherein to bury himself and his grief? There was a quiet meeting of the two men, struck by the same blow, the elder brought by it nearer to the grave, the younger having formed through it a grave for the full pride of life and youth. There was not much more for Paul to hear. The father knew little of his daughter, and had not sought to learn more.

"Paul, should she ever fall in your way, deal kindly to her, for her father's sake if you can no longer do so for her own. Will you, Paul?"

"I will," he replied, firmly. "And now farewell, my good father; may we soon meet again, happy we can never be, but perchance we may become more resigned."

"Amen," said the old man, but he shook his head doubtfully.

From that day forth Paul Smitt of Oderbruck had lived in the lonely Forsthaus, and since that day there had passed ten long, weary, uneventful years. He did his work conscientiously and well, was respected and feared by his servants and dependants, but during all those years no one had come any nearer to the lonely man. If any one were ill or in trouble, he was kind and sympathetic, inexhaustible in charity and well doing, but all thanks, all expression

of feeling he would ward off sternly. One day sped with him like another. At six he would take his frugal breakfast of beer, soup, and coarse black bread, at one he dined as frugally, at eight he took his supper, read for his instruction or amusement until ten, then went to bed.

Paul's grief had not diminished by his brooding on it as the years rolled on. Before he had been three weeks at his new home old Emil Bergen died, and Paul was left without a friend in the world. The only people with whom he might have visited were the keepers of the hotel on the top of the Brocken, to whom it was a two hours' walk over a rough, stony road. But he never sought their society; besides, in summer they were too busy with constant visitors, and in the winter they were either totally snowed up, or left the place altogether.

One winter night, the wind howled and moaned, and beat against the firm-built house as though it would level it at one gust, and when the wind ceased, the snow began steadily to fall, and falling still for eight whole days, lay so high upon the ground that the only way out of the house was by its roof. This was not unusual, and when the snow had hardened over, the inmates turned out by the roof as though it were a most natural thing. After a few days it snowed again, and one night Paul was roused from sleep by hearing some commotion in the house.

"What is it?" he called out; "what is the matter?"

"Travellers lost in the snow, sir; we are bringing them in."

"Right," he replied, "I shall be down directly." And in a few moments he was standing among his men in the long dark passage, where by the dim light of a candle a woman's body was being borne into the house, followed by a man carrying a child. The boy was living, there was no doubt of that, but the woman's fate was doubtful. When he saw that it was a woman, Paul approached no nearer.

"Prepare a warm bedroom at once," he commanded. "Hand her over to the female servants, and let me know if she be alive or dead. For all restoratives come to me. You, my brave fellows," he said, addressing the rescuers, "come in here and drink something hot."

This invitation they were not slow to obey, and while drinking, they told how they had been belated at their work, how they had heard something moaning at their feet, and how they had found this couple half buried in the snow. Presently a woman servant came in and reported that the mother was alive but very ill, and Paul ordered that if it were possible, some one should go over to Andreasberg next day to fetch the doctor. Meanwhile they should take the usual precautions for her and the child; for the care of people rescued from the snow was not a new experience at Oderbruck. Had the unfortunate wanderer been a man, Paul would have been the first at his bedside; but a woman, such a case had not occurred before, and he avoided women. For weeks this woman lay in his house

half dead. Daily he inquired after her, allowed his two maids to devote themselves entirely to her and the child, but in no other way allowed this incident to interfere with his life. The child, which had once run in his way and stood in mute admiration of the splendid man in grey and green, he sternly ordered to be kept out of sight. "Feed and keep the boy well, let him have all he needs, but do not let him run in my path," he said. And it never happened again.

After months of illness, weeks of convalescence, the sick woman was restored to health, and with her complete restoration spring also had set in, and she was anxious to proceed upon her way. But though warned and dissuaded by all the servants, she could not be induced to leave the house without seeing its master, and thanking him in person for his kindness.

So one evening in the twilight, when she had heard his firm heavy tread along the gravel, had heard him close the outer door behind him, and when he was about to enter his parlour, she ran down from her room and encountered him in the dark passage.

"Who is it?" he asked; he seeing still less than she, for he had come from out of the light.

"The woman whom you have sheltered for so long, sir. May I not speak a few words to you?" she asked, for he seemed inclined to enter the room and leave her standing without.

"What is it? Do you want to know your way? My men can tell you. Or money?—you shall have some."

"Neither," she said, taken aback by the hardness of his address. "I wanted to thank you." As she spoke, she followed him into the room.

He stood with his back to the window and disembarassed himself of his gun; she was opposite him and the failing light fell full upon her face.

"I do not love thanks. I have done no more than common humanity demanded." He looked up at her with a mien that said, you can go now. But when he saw her, he was spell-bound; a wild glare came into his eyes, and he seized her fiercely by the hand.

"Beatrice, is it you?"

It was her turn to be amazed; she had not seen him clearly before; now he had turned more to the light.

"My God!" she stammered. "O no, it cannot be Paul Smitt!"

"It is," he said, dropping her hand. The wild look had faded, the face had regained its hardness. "I am glad," he went on stiffly, "that chance has thrown you in my way. I can now deliver the message your dead father gave me for you."

"My father dead!" she screamed. "Oh Heaven, this also!" She fell down fainting at his feet.

Coolly and with seeming unconcern Paul rang for a servant, told him to remove the fainting woman, said that if she asked for a message from him, they should give her a letter he would presently write, ordered that she should be sped on her way with every comfort, but commanded

sternly that she might be brought no more into his presence.

Her father dead, the father to whom she was now about to go, to fall down at his feet and entreat his forgiveness, to pray him to grant a home, if not to herself, at least to her child. Led away by childish vanity, Beatrice had trusted the promises of the young squire of V—— that he would make her a lady, elevate her to his own rank. She had firmly believed until some few years since that he had married her, that the paper he had given her to sign was a true document, and that she had been basely deserted by her husband. When he left her, she had settled down quietly and soberly in busy little Andreasberg, where neither her name nor her story was known. There she had lived, respected and beloved, working her way steadily, keeping herself and educating her child, and even her own keen shame was beginning to deaden somewhat in feeling from its having no nourishment from without. Till one day, as she was walking through the marketplace to take some work home, she met the man who had played her false. He was arm in arm with another gentleman, smoking and laughing. She flew towards him, stammering she knew not what. He turned upon her fiercely, and muttered: "You shall suffer for this, woman!" Then with some light laughing remark to his companion, of which she could only distinguish "Some mistaken resemblance—must be mad!" they passed along.

From that day, Andreasberg was no refuge for her. Her story, mutilated and aggravated, was in every one's mouth, and one day, goaded to despair and frenzy, she determined to run from the town and seek her father's house once more. At least he could not be harder than the world. An angry visit from the squire, whom she had crossed effectually in a plan of marriage, caused her to pack her few valuables about herself, take up her child, and fly from him into the dark cold night with the snow lying thickly on the ground. She had gone on and on in a condition of half dream, with only sense enough to cover her boy from the cold; she felt how the chill air was benumbing her, how the snow clogged her footsteps, and at last knew nothing more till she found herself at the forester's house. From the wrath of the deceiver to the wrath of the deceived.

Beatrice threw herself on the floor in an agony of grief. As she lay thus, the servant Anna came in.

"Madam," she said, "your child is not well. Will you come to him?"

In an instant all her senses returned, and she followed to the adjoining room. The boy lay in his little bed, his face red with fever, moaning as though in pain, and when he saw his mother, it was but a very weak smile that played round his face.

"My child, my child!" cried Beatrice, falling on her knees beside the cot; "you must not be ill now, not just now, we cannot stay here, we must go. Do you think it is serious, Anna?"

"I'm afraid he's sickening for some child's illness, ma'am," was the reply; "at any rate you cannot move him as he is, you must wait and see what it turns to."

"But I can stay in this house no longer," she cried, "I must, I must, go."

"The Herr Förster would never turn you out while he could offer you a roof. You do not know him, madam; you do not know how good he is. I will go to him and tell him the child is ill, and he will, I am sure, press you to remain," and before Beatrice could prevent her the girl was gone.

While Beatrice was fighting with herself, holding her child in her arms meanwhile, the door opened and a firm step passed along the floor. She did not need to raise her head. She knew who stood there.

"Beatrice," he said, and his voice was softer than it had been that morning, "Beatrice, you must stay here; you must not imperil your child's life. I shall not come into your way more than before; had you not sought me, you would never have known under whose roof you had been all this while; nor should I have known," he went on, his voice failing him somewhat, "whom I had sheltered."

For some seconds there was silence in the room, then: "Have you any belongings?" he suddenly asked, "who will be anxious at your long absence? I will send a messenger if you will tell me where and to whom."

It had cost him much to ask this question.

"None."

He felt strangely relieved by the answer; why, he did not know. "Are you a widow?"

"I was never a wife."

He said no more, but stood for some time silently before her. His usually firm-set mouth worked ominously, and some tempest was brewing in his inner man; but he beat it down, and said, after some time of silence: "See that the child wants no comforts, the doctor will, I hope, be here to-morrow; it is difficult to get one to come, we are so out of the world. I wish the boy a good recovery. Farewell!" He turned to leave the room.

"Paul!" she cried, "Paul!" and she stretched out her hands imploringly after him. She understood that he meant this to be a farewell for ever; he did not wish to see her again; and yet she felt through it all that he loved her still. She could not bear to see him depart thus.

"Hush!" he said, turning round, with his hand upon the lock of the door, "you will excite your child;" with that he opened it and vanished.

A fearful time followed this! The child lay for weeks ill of scarlet fever, combatting between life and death. Beatrice never left his bedside; neither she nor the doctor dared venture a hope for his recovery.

As for Paul, he went about his daily work steadily and sternly as usual, but there was a greater thoughtfulness about his mouth, and a deeper sadness about his eye, and his people dared approach him less than ever. For inwardly a fierce battle was raging. He loved

Beatrice still, blindly, devotedly; the sight of her had roused him from his life in death. He had learnt that she was free, could still be his, and yet he hesitated. All would he forgive and forget, but could he forget with the child daily under his eyes? Perhaps he might die in this fever; and that was his one hope and wild desire, that the child might die. He inquired constantly as to its welfare and if he heard it was worse, a fierce pleasure would shoot through his heart.

At length, one day, when he was returning from his work, he met Beatrice in the little wood behind the house. Her face had become thin and drawn with care, her eyes were sunk and red with weeping, her whole aspect piteous. The nurse had sent her into the air, declaring that if she did not go out, she too would be ill, and then what would become of the boy. She moved along the walks like a sad spirit, and when she saw the tall figure approaching from the opposite side, she started and turned paler.

"How is the boy?" asked Paul, coming up to her.

"He is dying, I fear; and O! I cannot bear to lose him." She rung her hands in her agony of distress.

When Paul saw her grief he felt ashamed of his wicked hope. Was that true love, he asked himself, to wish a grief thus intense to her whom he adored above all else in the world? No, and it was not worthy of a true heart.

"Let me see him," he said, suddenly. "I have had much experience of illness during my lonely life."

She led the way, and he followed. As they opened the door, the nurse motioned them to silence, her finger on her mouth. "He sleeps," she whispered, "we must not wake him. This is the crisis," she murmured, turning to the forester; "either he will pass away in this slumber, or recover."

They softly approached the bedside. Beatrice knelt down and buried her head in the clothes. She was praying. The nurse slipped softly out of the room. Paul stood at the foot of the cot and looked on. The child's little face, which Paul had last seen so bonnie and bright, was worn and thin; his breath was drawn so softly that at times it seemed to come no more; one small arm lay on the coverlet, its thin hand was clasped in its mother's grasp. She remained on her knees immovable, he knew not how long; only by her deep-drawn sighs he could see how earnestly she was wringing and imploring for the little life that lay there so passively.

The blinding tears welled into his eyes, the first tears he had shed since he had learnt her untruth towards him.

Thus the night passed; he still standing; she kneeling. When the first cold streak of dawn fell into the room the child awoke.

"Mamma!" he said, feebly.

Suddenly she arose. "My child!" she exclaimed. "Saved! Thanks be to God."

"Amen!" answered a deep voice at the foot of the bed.

She started. "Paul, you here?"

"I have been here all night, and my prayers have gone up to Heaven with yours for the recovery of your boy. May I say our boy?"

She disengaged one hand from the child's neck, and gave it to Paul. He took it and pressed an ardent kiss on its attenuated fingers, and then he kissed the child.

"You must go now, dear Paul," said Beatrice, softly: "we must not excite the boy."

"May I not stay?" he pleaded, his tone gentle and the old tender look in his eyes.

"Not now, Paul, not just now. We will meet soon."

"Never to be parted again?"

"Pray Heaven no!"

Six years later, a lady and her companion visited the Brockenfeld and put up at Oderbrück. The lady was a sad embittered woman, who neither loved nor was loved in this world. Walking in the Forester's little garden after dinner, she saw him sitting there, smoking a long pipe; by his side a bright woman who held a child upon her knee, with whom the father was playing and which crowed merrily at him. A little beyond, a bigger boy was coachman to a small girl, harnessed as his horse. They were running in full gallop towards their parents, unaware of the presence of strangers.

"See, papa!" cries the elder of the two, "Maggie and I have been for a long trot, and have brought back mamma some of her own, own flowers." They laid a small bunch of wild camellias before their mother.

At that moment Paul Smitt perceived the ladies, and rising politely, accosted them, saying he hoped they had been content with the very frugal hospitality it was in his power to offer them.

"Oh, quite," said the lady. "Is that your family, Herr Förster? You all look very happy: more happy than I have seen most people look in the town. How do you manage to exist up here? And to be happy?"

"One is happy wherever one's beloved are," he answered, fervently.

The reply was unexpected, curiously solemn, and sounded strange to the Squire's wife.

POPULAR SONGS OF ITALY.

THE songs the people sing in Italy are very different from the dogrel verses we are accustomed to hear at the Italian Opera. They are real songs, and tell us something of the habits and customs of the people—something, too, of their aspirations. They are like wild flowers. They have sprung up everywhere. No one knows who wrote them; you might as well ask who wrote the songs of the linnet.

Almost all their songs are songs of the affections: cradle songs, serenades, and dirges, which have been handed down—maybe with alterations—from generation to generation. Every pretty girl has her poet-laureate; every village has its improvisatore. Many, many,

ballads relate to brigandage; some few to hunting and the delights of the table. Wine, gambling, and a disgraceful kind of gallantry are the themes of a thousand songs. In Calabria, it is the fashion to idolise assassins and write songs about them, which the girls and young men sing at harvest time. In Corsica, it is the fashion to sing Voceri (or Vendetta songs) when any one dies a violent death. Hags are hired for the purpose (called Voce-ratrici); it is their duty to dance and brandish knives around the coffin of the deceased, and to drink wine (some say blood) to his memory.

Of all the songs of Italy, the songs of Tuscany are the most poetical and the least tainted with sensuality. Being written in pure Italian, they have a strictly national character and serve as models to the rest of the peninsula. The Stornelli or Pastoral Odes, and the Nanne or Cradle Songs, are all Tuscan in their character. They become corrupted in the different villages into which they are introduced, but in print they are nearly always the same. Scratch the patois with your pen, and you will find the pure Tuscan underneath. Venice is famous for its serenades; Naples for its love songs, properly so called; Rome for its Novelle or Sacred Ballads—the epics of the saints, the only tracts tolerated by the Church of Rome. The Maggi (Songs of May) are sung in every village in the land, from the borders of Istria and Tyrol to Cape Pesaro.

One reason why the Italians have no national ballads is that, until recently, they had no nationality. They never cared much about their history; they never took enough interest in their local patriotism to write ballads about it. The Italians are a brave people, but they are not self-reliant. They are affectionate, but not faithful; hospitable to strangers, but not famous for gratitude. They illuminate their streets in honour of the incoming dynasty, but they never sang songs about a dethroned king as the Scotch did about the Stuarts. They have plenty of old castles, but no chivalry; plenty of old families, but no old familiar name like Robin Hood or William Tell. Their oldest "myth" is Garibaldi; their oldest battle songs were written in 1859. One of the best of these, the Three-coloured Flag, was written by a Garibaldian:

THE THREE-COLOURED FLAG.*

I.

Hurrah for the Three-coloured Flag,
The best and the bravest of all!
Hurrah for the martyrs who fall
For the love of the Three-coloured Flag!

II.

Hurrah for the king and the Chief
Who ended our national grief!
Hurrah for the king,
And the cause that we sing,
When we die for the Three-coloured Flag!
Hurrah for the Three-coloured Flag!

* *La Bandiera Tricolore sempre è stata la più bella, &c.*

III.

The flag that we love is so pretty,
Its fame shall be sung in a ditty;
Its virtues are seen
In the red, white, and green,
When it waves on the walls of a city!
Hurrah for the Three-coloured Flag!

These Volunteer songs are helping on the great work of regeneration in Italy. Borne from north to south, from east to west, and back again, by soldiers who sing them in the village inns while on the march, and at home in work and play after their term of service, the love songs of Italy, as well as its ballads and war songs, get scattered over the length and breadth of the land. A few years hence, every Italian peasant who has a brother, a father, or a son in the army (and no peasant in Italy is without some such military connexion, owing to the conscription) will know something or other of his mother-tongue. The songs of Tuscany will work their way into the provincial dialects, and in process of time a united language no less than a united territory will be the result. Never did popular songs do a better work than the patriotic songs of Italy are doing at the present moment. The conscript soldiers of the north and south of Italy—compelled to become Tuscans, or they do not understand the orders of their chiefs—are carrying the germs of language, of literature, into lonely places and uncultured villages, and are making boorish peasants ashamed of their jargon. It is already becoming a point of pride with country girls to sing in pure Tuscan: perhaps in remembrance of the volunteers who rushed wildly about the country, a few years ago, in search of foes and sweethearts, finding both, and leaving with each some striking souvenir—a kiss, a song, or a bullet! In no other way can we account for the prodigious number of Tuscan songs which village girls, who do not know how to read or write, and cannot speak anything but patois, know by heart. The girls will become matrons, and the children of the future will become Italians—not mere Neapolitans, Lombards, and Piedmontese—and will speak their mother-tongue in the good time coming.

TOM BUTLER.

A BOY'S HERO. IN SIX CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I. THE HILL.

FOR every boy there is his hero—a splendid, valiant, noble creature, to whom he looks up, physically. As the hero holds the smaller hand in his, and strides along, the boy admires and treasures every speech. Such a one for me was once the brave and gallant Tom Butler, *who knew the world*, which I did not; who could talk, could go anywhere, and do anything. Yet there were not so many years between us. It was clear action that interposed the large interval.

With this hero I became acquainted very early in life. He comes before me in three scenes, and the first scene was abroad in a foreign country.

At one period I see our family in France, on a hill overlooking Havre, attended by masters, watched over by that conscientious governess, Miss Simpson, while I myself was in a state of eternal protest and revolt. Never did the bright blessings—and such cheap blessings as they are!—of sun and tropical days, and balmy airs, and trees, and acres of soft grass, eddying down towards the town far below, seem so inviting. Those recollections are shaded by no dark or lowering days, no gloomy fogs, no weeks of drizzle; it was Italian, cerulean blue, pleasant green, and most inviting.

The hill, or Côte, as it was called, was an agreeable suburb, looking down on the great seaport, whose houses, docks, and stores were all clustered below: with the sea beyond. A most agreeable amphitheatre it was, and the descent was in the main by terraces and stages of steps. The ascent, under the broiling French suns, coming at the close of an important expedition to the town, was a very serious and exhausting business. On the edge of the hill, I see now a sort of comb, as it were, of bright villas on the roadside, with a fine common in front. I say "fine," because adapted to boys' sport of every degree—to fights, ball play, kite-flying, and what not. Those residences, that seem to me now like houses out of an opera, for they were always in the glare of the Havre sun, were cheerful in their yellow tone, their green jalousies, their old-fashioned air, and the luxuriant gardens behind and about them, where the apple-trees abounded, and the oranges tried to grow, but were cut off in an untimely way by organised parties of bandits. The grapes clustered about the windows so luxuriantly that they were held in low estimation, as not worth pillage and inferior in quality.

Most of these mansions were occupied by English colonists—one or two by English exiles: and I recal our immediate neighbour, seen within his chateau-like gate stooping over his flowers, a Captain Butler, one sleeve of his pepper-and-salt shooting-coat growing flat to his chest. A great family swarmed about him, and there were rumours of a struggle and sore privations.

He was a grave man, haughty and reserved, and seemed then to take that curious shape of a separate *potentate*, as I have often remarked, endowed with more mysterious power and importance—greater

than seem to invest individuals of real influence at a later era. Our houses did not know each other, though we were not indisposed to intimacy—a distance, however, that did not extend to the junior branches. His son, Tom Butler, a tall English lad, thin, wiry, and pale, I looked up to with a longing admiration—he was so independent, so grand, so strong, and went where he liked. He seemed a *separate potentate*, too, and could "*do things*" which, somehow, I never could. Indeed, we saw that he and the one-armed captain were not on good terms, and two of us, one day, on a guilty ascent up an apple-tree in the next garden, heard below us a frightful altercation between the two men. Peeping through the branches—and not without misgiving lest the scene might end indirectly in our own personal detection, trial, and execution—we saw the captain's square face glowing with a sort of mournful and suppressed fury, and caught these memorable words:

"You disgraced me before, sir, and you have now disgraced me again!"

We had to carry this denunciation about with us for days, nearly bursting, and not daring to reveal it to mortal, save an English maid, who could be relied on, and who shook her head and said, "Like enough—like enough!"

The English complexion of the district was certainly very strong. Not very far on was Mr. Darbyshire's house, a charming English place, with hothouses and green-houses, and a real Scotch gardener, who had been there ten or fifteen years, could not pass one of the roadside crosses, or meet a procession, without his features expressing open pain and hostility. They were "a peeteous crew," he said, to the last, "the puir, benighted creeturs," and the like. He would not mix with them. His master, Mr. Darbyshire, was a wealthy merchant, in the shipping way, who had shares in the steamers between Southampton and our port, and was universally known as "M. Debbisha." A little under the hill, with its roof on a level with its crest, was Mr. Longtail's English academy, with its highest references, to the Reverend William Short, British chaplain; to Captain Gunter, H. B. M. Consul, Quai Montpensier; to the Lord Montattic; to the Honourable Mrs. Colman; to W. H. Darbyshire, Esq., The Côte, Havre; and to many more. Mrs. Longtail looked after the boys' linen, and "was a guarantee for the comforts of a home." This was her husband's fond and too partial statement, loudly dissented

from by the young gentlemen, who called him old "Pig-in-the-Wind," the origin for which extraordinary sobriquet I never discovered, nor, indeed, thought of asking. "Guarantee, indeed," said Tom, contemptuously, "yes, guarantee—that's all the tea we get out of her!—and fine swash it is!" The young gentlemen wore a uniform here, gilt buttons and puce-coloured cuffs and collars.

Our house, as I have said, was charming to look at, with its green jalousies and vines creeping all over, and its cool porch. The upper story took the shape of a pediment or triangle, with a circular window, or hole in the middle, an apartment which I always fondly ambitioned, not for the elevation or for the view, which was fine, but for the mechanical pleasures associated with that window; for the intricacies and peculiarities were more than are usually attached to a French window. It was otherwise allotted. It commanded a full view, too, of the charming common, where all the sports went on, and where the boys of the district, pursuing their various pastimes with much cheerful noise and spirits, inflamed me—but too often detained within, as punishment for idleness—to the verge of frenzy. Then I would see—taking a furtive glance askance from the Roman history—that the gentlemanly Darbyshire boys—"young princes," Miss Simpson held them up to us, for their genteel deportment—were playing "prisoners' base," or, more seductive still, flying the kite.

The advantages which residence in France was supposed to offer for educational purposes were not lost sight of. All masters available were duly "laid on," as it were, to supplement Miss Simpson, whose very universal range of accomplishments, of course, precluded her from having a very profound acquaintance with any special branch. I think, however, she secretly rather resented this introduction, though there was an indemnity in the visits of the professors. Their variety lent a piquancy to the day's routine.

When the young ladies received their lessons she always assisted, in right of her office. The French master's name was M. Bernard, quite a picture, semi-ecclesiastical; with a white neckcloth, to which starch was unknown, swathed about his neck on the hottest days, and secured firmly by a hair brooch set round with imitation diamonds. I am thus particular because I had often studied him minutely. He had a long blue coat; his head was bald; he

had that amiable soft way of talking, and chirping air of general assent to everything that we see in old gentlemen on the French boards. He arrived every second day, having a few pupils on the Côte, showing the usual signs of intense heat. To say that his knowledge of English was merely imperfect would be too indulgent a compliment, it being very much akin to the language in which the British sailor converses with the Chinese. But, with the innate gallantry of a Frenchman, he was always recognising "Mees Seemsong's" presence—was she not a sister, too, in his profession?—by politely taking her, as it were, into the lesson. And a favourite formula of his was, after a pinch of snuff, which he carefully brushed off the starchless neckcloth with the back of his little finger, "Mais pour ces choses là, mon enfant, Mademoiselle Seemsong, vous dira tout après." Miss Simpson always knew the meaning of this phrase, much as the native Sepoys pick up British words of command, and would smile and nod and murmur, "Wee. Je ferry! Now, Mary, attend to what Moosier Bernard says." With the "petites dames," it must be said, he got on excellently. There was that laudable emulation, which seems more found among girls, to have their "themes" ready—"dictées" he called them—besides a pride which, I think, was unaccountably wanting in myself and other contemporaries of my acquaintance. We only gave grudging measure, and any device was greedily seized to shirk work. He would at times lose temper, and make me a long, impassioned, chaleureuse discourse, as if he were in a pulpit. He used gestures and a variety of tones, telling me that I had a "léthargie incroyable," and also really seemed to hint that the certain and ultimate doom in store for me was an ignominious end—I suppose the French guillotine, if my disgraceful career terminated in his country. All this I gathered from his manner more than from his words, though I was picking up French in an astonishing way, from clandestine association with what were called the "low boys" of the place. Every month M. Bernard's modest stipend was paid him, with a little solemnity and circumstance which gratified him not a little, he coming in uniform, as it were—his Sunday coat, a genuinely starched tie, and no hair brooch—the absence of that ornament being, strange to say, his grandest tenue. Then he was received in the drawing-room, announced by the too-familiar John as "Meshew Bernard," and after the inter-

passage of a sealed envelope, cake and English "sherri" were introduced—it always made him cough and me laugh—the whole concluding with my being abruptly hurried out to a cell. He used sometimes to moralise over me in my own presence, first blowing his nose and then looking fixedly into the handkerchief as if remarking there something quite unusual. "A ce que me parait, madame, cet enfant là a un naturel *effréné* qu'il faut tenir à main bride. Mais j'espère"—sip from the glass of sherri—"que le bon Dieu—qu'enfin les prières de sa bonne mère," &c. &c. Then seeing the consternation this denunciation caused, as it were hinting at crimes that he could not disclose, he would change his note altogether. "Poah! We must have courage, madame. He has a brave spirit. We shall make a man of him! As for the good boys, I would not give *that* for them. Puer bonæ indolis. Il a de l'esprit, mais il faut seulement le faire borner!"

Now I see Mr. John showing in another gentleman, the professor of music, M. Belcour, a handsome young man with long brown hair, which he tossed a good deal. To him Miss Simpson's manner was quite different, being curt and haughty to the last degree, as though she suspected him. We could not understand the motive of this, which was indeed only a frail guard for her unprotected heart. The handsome Belcour had, indeed, subdued it to his own. Not that he cared for *that* cheap victory—a governess, indeed! He dreamed of the great English countess, with an estate in the rich fat England, among "*ces gens de bierre et puddin*." He was full of sentiment, and made his dark eyes roll for practice. He used to play with frantic energy, "*splashing*" the notes about, as it were, with his eyes on the ceiling. He had this singularity, he would teach nothing but his own music, bringing "*them little wisps o' songs*," as Mr. John happily described them, a picture of a mournful young man on the title, following a flight of birds with an inexpressible look of depression. "*RÊVE DE BONHEUR*," it was called; and I remember the morning that he brought it, presenting it with an infinite homage and melancholy empressment to the head of the house, conveying that it had been composed expressly in her honour. He fancied, I think, that the vast estates of which he dreamed were somewhere, for there was an air of substantial comfort, not to say luxury—wine from England, &c.—which beguiled him. Later

it was discovered the *Rêve de Bonheur* had been presented, with a similar declaration of its production, to several ladies during the last three or four years. He was too romantic for the humble sphere he moved in: actual instruction formed a very small portion of his school of teaching, the main principle of which was to ramble in a dreamy way over the chords, to play and sing "*little things of his own*." When at last he was firmly remonstrated with upon this unprofitable system, he answered haughtily that, "*as it seemed to him, there was a disposition to find fault?*"—"Well, scarcely that—" "Yes yes, there was. Let it end, then; it was a mere slavery. He could not teach these children; they had no esprit, no emotion—*point d'âme!*"

This unwarrantable attack produced quite a new tone, and a quiet dismissal; on which M. Belcour quite lost his temper, behaved like an enraged one, held out a wrist that quivered as he proclaimed that he had been treated "*brutally*," and quite unconsciously revealed a not too-white shirt, with very saw-like edges. He withdrew for ever, but the next day sent in a charge for two francs fifty cents, for a piece of music, which was duly sent to him. Later a mysterious story reached the house—brought, I believe, by M. Bernard—and which, from the secrecy and awful looks, we concluded was nothing less than Housebreaking, or a great case of Arson; but I believe the real truth was, that the music-publisher's wife—ahem!—"ce pauvre Schneider!" said M. Bernard—which must have referred to an elopement of some description.

M. Belcour's successor was quite a different sort of man, a half German, Weimar by name, stout, red-faced, yellow-haired, and lame. He always seemed to be fragrant of cherry-brandy; not that I had made acquaintance yet with that agreeable liqueur, but it seemed to have an air of familiarity. He sometimes indirectly apologised for introducing that aroma, laying it on "*the heat of the day*." He was a great professor, in heavy practice, and had the duty of teaching three times a week, at contract price, the young ladies of a convent close by. This simple fact accounted for the almost malignant hostility of Belcour, whom the thought of the various young English heiresses there pursuing their education, inflamed to madness. M. Weimar was a true anchorite, and cared only for his piano, after, of course, his well-known *Harmonies Pratiques*, a vast work, of which he had done only the first number, and in which he

intended to give specimens of modulations from every known key into every other. This, on the doctrine of permutation, involved a vast amount of paper and notes, and he had only ventured on what he called "mon premier cahier." I confess I was delighted with this specimen of harmony; for there was in my abandoned nature this redeeming point, an intense love of music, and of harmonies and modulations. Here was a new realm; and while he showed, with skilful touch, how to pass from the key of A minor into C, by some skilful but exquisite transitions, I would steal up and listen, rapt. (We had subscribed for two copies of the work, and I am looking at them now.) He had never noticed me, as being quite out of his world, as it might be a stringless and bridgeless violin; but one day when he came, as usual very warm, and found me, all unconscious, sitting at the piano, with his *Harmonies Pratiques* open before me, and striving desperately to work from A minor into C, he entered softly, and, it may be, recognising a blending chord, called out, "C sharp, boy!" He thrust one large hand over mine, and crashed down the right notes. "What do you know?" he said; "have you learned? Surely that Simpson——"

"No," I said; "but O, sir, this is so beautiful!"

After that, though he did not like strangers in the room, he would often say, "Let him stay."

I see him now, sitting at one side—the juvenile player he was instructing with her face anxiously put close to the music, the small hands jerking spasmodically, grasshopper-like—his round figure, in a snuff-brown coat (and some cheap Order too), stooped inwards, while his pencil pointed laboriously, and head emphasised his movements. Of a sudden he had unconsciously pushed himself into the place, and had played it off in a bold rattling style. With Miss Simpson he was not at all popular, for to her he was blunt and gruff in his manner, being sure, if any one came in with a message to her, to turn round and call out sharply, "Do keep silence, please! How can I teach if that is to go on?"

"Really so ungentlemanlike in his tone," Miss Simpson would protest. "I don't know where he can have been brought up."

This feeling, too, was owing to another

reason; for at an early period of his tuition he had said despotically, "Tell me who is to look after these children and see that they practise all that I shall drill them in?"

"O, Miss Simpson, of course—she plays very nicely herself."

"What does she play? Then here, mademoiselle, sit down—let us have your *cheval de bataille*, please."

Miss Simpson shrank away. She had a horse of battle, *Through the Wood*, a popular air of her day, much sung at Exeter, her natal town, and arranged with variations—six I believe—by the ingenious Hertz. "O, really, sir!" she began.

"Just as you please," he said, turning away; "it was for the interest of the pupils I asked."

Scandalised authority had now to intervene: "Miss Simpson, I must request you will be kind enough to let M. Weimar hear you."

She went to the instrument. It was a fine piece, no doubt, *Introduction Maestoso*, with sixteen pages to follow. She had barely struck the first two solemn chords, and had launched into the little gallopade up the piano, which always follows, when he quietly turned away:

"That will do," he said. "Thank you—quite enough. I see perfectly. So you waste your time on *that stuff*? Now if I teach mademoiselle, and am to make a player of her, I must lay down this fixed rule: that no one interferes or touches the piano when I am absent, by way of example. Does madame agree?" Of course madame had to agree, impressed with this sort of Abernethy plainness. "After all, you know he had the interests of the child at stake." Miss Simpson never forgave.

So he came and laboured, often staying three quarters beyond his stipulated hour, labouring, grinding, scolding, at times with a severity that brought tears to eyes; forcing those small fingers through the heavy loam of the great John Field's *Concerto in B*, still surly, still reeking of the cherry-brandy, until at last he had performed his promise, and made a player of his pupil. He must be long since gathered into the Havre earth, for he was then elderly; and I dare say it troubled his last moments to think he had not got beyond the opening number of his grand work, the *Harmonies Pratiques*.

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WRECKED IN PORT.

A SERIAL STORY BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP."

BOOK III.

CHAPTER V. BAFFLED.

MARIAN remained standing where Walter Joyce had left her, gazing after his retreating figure until it had passed out of sight. At first so little did she comprehend the full meaning of the curt sentence in which he had conveyed to her his abrupt rejection of the bribe which she had proposed to him, his perfect appreciation of the snare which she had prepared for him, that she had some sort of an idea that he would hesitate on his career, stop, turn back, and finally consent, if not to an immediate concession to her views, at all events, to some further discussion, with a view to future settlement. But after his parting bow he strode unrelentingly onward, and it was not until he had reached the end of the newly-made road, and, dropping down into the meadows leading to Helmingham, had entirely disappeared, that Marian realised how completely she had been foiled, was able to understand, to estimate, and, in estimating, to wince under, the bitter scorn with which her suggestion had been received, the scathing terms in which that scorn had been conveyed. A money value for anything to be desired—that was the only way in which he could make it clear to her understanding or appreciation—was not that what he had said? A money value! Marian Creswell was not of those who sedulously hide their own failings from themselves, shrink at the very thought of them, make cupboard-skeletons of them, to be always kept under turned key. Too sensible for this, she knew that this treatment only enhanced the importance of the skeleton, without at all benefit-

ing its possessor, felt that much the better plan was to take it out and subject it to examination, observe its form and its articulation, dust its bones, see that its joints swung easily, and replace it in its cupboard-home. But all these rites were, of course, performed in private, and the world was to be kept in strict ignorance of the existence of the skeleton. And now Walter Joyce knew of it! a money value, her sole standard of appreciation! Odd as it may seem, Marian had never taken the trouble to imagine to herself to what motive Walter would ascribe her rejection of him, her preference of Mr. Creswell. True, she had herself spoken in her last letter of the impossibility of her enjoying life without wealth and the luxuries which wealth commands, but she had argued to herself that he would scarcely have believed that, principally, perhaps, from the fact of her having advanced the statement so boldly, and now she found him throwing the argument in her teeth. And if Walter knew and understood this to be the dominant passion of her soul, the great motive power of her life, the knowledge was surely not confined to him—others would know it too. In gaining her position as Mr. Creswell's wife, her success, her elation, had been so great as completely to absorb her thoughts, and what people might say as to the manner in which that success had been obtained, or the reasons for which the position had been sought, had never troubled her for one instant. Now, however, she saw at once that her designs had been suspected, and doubtless talked of, sneered at, and jested over, and her heart beat with extra speed, and the blood suffused her cheeks, as she thought of how she had probably been the subject of ale-house gossip, how the townsfolk and villagers amongst whom,

since the canvassing time, she had recently been so much, must have all discussed her after she had left their houses, and all had their passing joke at the young woman who had married the old man for his money! She stamped her foot in rage upon the ground as the idea came into her mind; it was too horrible to think she should have afforded scandal-matter to these low people, it was so galling to her pride; she almost wished that—and just then the sharp, clear, silvery tinkle of the little bells sounded on her ear, and the perfectly-appointed carriage with the iron-grey ponies came into view, and the next minute she had taken the reins from James, had received his salute, and, drawing her sealskin cloak closely round her, was spinning towards her luxurious home, with the feeling that she could put up with all their talk, and endure all their remarks, so long as she enjoyed the material comforts which money had undoubtedly brought her.

Marian started on her return drive in a pleasant frame of mind, but the glow of satisfaction had passed away long before she reached home, and had been succeeded by very different feelings. She no longer cared what the neighbouring people might say about her; she had quite got over that, and was pondering, with gradually increasing fury, over the manner in which Walter Joyce had received her proposition, and the light and airy scorn, never for one moment striven to be concealed, with which he had tossed it aside. She bit her lip in anger and vexation as she thought of her tremendous folly in so speedily unfolding her plan without previously making herself acquainted with Joyce's views, and seeing how he was likely to receive the suggestion; she was furious with herself as she recalled his light laugh and easy bearing, so different from anything she had previously seen in him, and—By the way, that was odd! she had not noticed it before, but undoubtedly he was very much improved in appearance and manner; he had lost the rustic awkwardness and bashfulness which had previously rendered him somewhat ungainly, and had acquired confidence and ease. She had heard this before; her husband had mentioned it to her as having been told him by Mr. Teesdale, who kept the keenest outlook on Joyce and his doings, and who regarded him as a very dangerous opponent; she had heard this before, but she had paid but little attention to it, not thinking that she should so soon have an opportunity of personally veri-

fying the assertion. She acknowledged it now; saw that it was exactly the manner which would prove wonderfully winning among the electors, who were neither to be awed by distant demeanour, nor to be cajoled by excessive familiarity. In Walter Joyce's pleasant bearing and cheery way there was a something which seemed to say, "I am of you, and understand you, although I may have had, perhaps, a few more brains and a little better education;" and there was nothing that more quickly got to the hearts of the Brocksoppians than the feeling that they were about to elect one of themselves. This was a chord which Mr. Creswell could never touch, although he had every claim to do so, and although Mr. Gould had had thousands of a little pamphlet struck off and circulated among the voters—a little pamphlet supposed to be Mr. Creswell's biography, adorned with woodcuts borrowed from some previous publication, the first of which represented Mr. Creswell as a cabin-boy, about to receive the punishment of the "colt" from the mate—he had scarcely been on board ship during his life—while the last showed him, and Mrs. Creswell, with short waist, long train, and high ostrich feathers in her head (supposed to have been originally the vera effigies of some lady mayoress in George the Third's time), receiving the cream of the aristocracy in a gilded saloon. But the people declined to believe in the biography, which, indeed, did rather more harm than good, and cast doubt on the real history of Mr. Creswell's self-manufacture, than which, in its way, nothing could be more creditable.

Before Marian had reached her home she had revolved all these things very carefully in her mind, and the result which she arrived at was, that as it was impossible to purchase peace, and as the fight must now be fought out at all hazards, the only way—not indeed to ensure success, for that was out of the question, but to stand a good chance for it—was to pay fresh and unremitting attention to the canvassing, and, above all, to try personally to enlist the sympathies of the voters, not leaving it, as in Woolgreaves it had hitherto been done, to Mr. Teesdale and his emissaries. With all her belief in money, Marian had a faith in position, which, though lately born, was springing up apace, and she felt that Squire Creswell might yet win many a vote which would be given to him out of respect to his status in the county, if he would only exert himself to obtain it.

Full of this idea, she drove through the lodge-gates at Woolgreaves, any little qualms or heart-sinkings which she might have recently felt disappearing entirely as she looked round upon the trim gardens, trim even in those first days of winter, and upon the long line of conservatories which had recently risen under her direction, as the hall-doors opened at her approach, and as she stepped out of her pony-carriage, the mistress of that handsome mansion, warmed and flower-scented and luxurious. Her pleasure was a little dashed when she found that Mr. Creswell had been carried off into Brocksopp by Mr. Gould, who had come down unexpectedly from London, and that Mr. Benthall was seated in the drawing-room with Maud and Gertrude, evidently intending to remain to luncheon, if he were invited. But she rallied in a moment, and accorded the invitation graciously, and did the honours of the luncheon table with all proper hospitality. Once or twice she winced a little at the obvious understanding between Gertrude and Mr. Benthall; a state of things for which, though to some extent prepared, she was by no means particularly grateful. It was not entirely new to her, this flirtation; she had noticed something of it a while ago, and her husband had made it the subject of one of his mild little jokes to her; but she had matters of greater import to attend to just then, and would see how it should be treated when the election was over.

After luncheon Marian, recollecting the determination she had arrived at in her homeward drive, was minded to put it in force at once, and accordingly said to her visitor, "Are you going back to the school, Mr. Benthall, or do you make holiday this afternoon?"

"Fortunately, my dear Mrs. Creswell," said Mr. Benthall, with a slight sign of that indolence which the consumption of an excellent luncheon superinduces in a man of full habit—"fortunately the law has done that for me! Wednesdays and Saturdays are half-holidays by—well, I don't know exactly by act of parliament, but at all events by Helmingham rule and system; so, to-day being Saturday, I am absolved from further work. To my infinite satisfaction, I confess."

"I am glad of that," said Marian; "for it will leave you free to accept my proposition. I have some business in Brocksopp, and I want an escort. Will you come?"

"I shall be delighted," replied Mr. Ben-

thall, "though I shall keep up my unfortunate character for plain speaking by asking you not to dawdle too long in the shops! I do get so horridly impatient while ladies are turning over a counterful of goods!"

"My dear Mr. Benthall, pray spare yourself any such dreadful anticipations! The business that takes me into Brocksopp is of a widely different character."

"And that is——"

"How can you ask at such a crisis?" said Marian, in a mock heroic style, for her spirits always rose at the prospect of action. "In what business should a wife be engaged at such a time but her husband's? My business of course is—electioneering!"

"Electioneering—you?"

"Well, canvassing; you know perfectly well what I mean!"

"And you want me to go with you?"

"Why not? Mr. Benthall, what on earth is all this bigotry about?"

"My dear Mrs. Creswell, do you not know that it is impossible for me to go with you on the expedition you propose?"

"No, I do not know it! Why is it impossible?"

"Simply because in politics I happen to be diametrically opposed to Mr. Creswell. My sympathies are strongly Liberal."

"Then, in the present election your intention is to vote against Mr. Creswell, and for his opponent?"

"Undoubtedly. Is this the first time you have heard this?"

"Most unquestionably! Who should have told me?"

"Mr. Creswell! Directly it was known that he would come forward in the Conservative interest, I told him my views!"

"He did not mention the circumstance to me," said Marian; then added, after a moment, "I never asked him about you, to be sure! I had no idea that there was the least doubt of the way in which you intended to vote."

There was a dead silence for a few minutes after this, a pause during which Gertrude Creswell took advantage of Marian's abstraction to catch Maud's eye, and to shape her mouth into the silent expression of the word "Row"—delivered three times with great solemnity. At last Marian looked up and said, with an evidently forced smile, "Well, then, I must be content to shrug my shoulders, and submit to these dreadful politics so far dividing us that I must give up all idea of your

accompanying me into Brocksopp, Mr. Benthall; but I shall be obliged if you will give me five minutes' conversation—I will not detain you longer—in the library."

Mr. Benthall, muttering that he should be delighted, rose from his chair and opened the door for his hostess to pass out; before he followed her he turned round to glance at the girls, and again Gertrude's fresh rosy lips pressed themselves together and then opened for the silent expression of the word "Row," but he took no notice of this cabalistic sign beyond nodding his head in a reassuring manner, and then followed Mrs. Creswell to the library.

"Pray be seated, Mr. Benthall," said Marian, dropping into a chair at the writing-table, and commencing to sketch vaguely on the blotting-book with a dry pen; "the news you told me just now has come upon me quite unexpectedly. I had no idea—looking at your intimacy in this house—intimacy which, as far as I know, has continued uninterruptedly to the present moment—no idea that you could have been going to act against us at so serious a crisis as the present."

Mr. Benthall did not like Mrs. Creswell, but he was a man of the world, and he could not avoid admiring the delicious insolence of the tone of voice which lent additional relish to the insolence of the statement, that he had continued to avail himself of their hospitality, while intending to requite it with opposition. He merely said, however, "The fault is not mine, Mrs. Creswell, as I have before said; immediately on the announcement of the contest, and of Mr. Creswell's coming forward as the Conservative candidate, I went straight to him and told him I was not a free agent in the matter. I labour under the misfortune—and it is one for which I know I shall receive no sympathy in this part of the country, for people, however good-hearted they may be, cannot pity where they cannot understand—I labour under the misfortune of coming of an old family, having had people before me who for years and years have held to Liberal opinions in fair weather and foul weather, now profiting by it, now losing most confoundedly, but never veering a hair's breadth for an instant. In those opinions I was brought up, and in those opinions I shall die; they may be wrong, I don't say they are not; I've not much time, or opportunity, or inclination, for the matter of that, for going very deeply into the question. I've taken it for granted, on the strength of the re-

commendation of wiser heads than mine; more than all, on the fact of their being the family opinions, held by the family time out of mind. I'm excessively sorry that in this instance those opinions clash with those held by a gentleman who is so thoroughly deserving of all respect as Mr. Creswell, and from whom I have received so many proofs of friendship and kindness. Just now it is especially provoking for me to be thrown into antagonism to him in any way, because—however, that's neither here nor there. I dare say I shall have to run counter to several of my friends hereabouts, but there is no one the opposition to whom will concern me so much as Mr. Creswell. However, as I've said before, it is a question of sticking to the family principles, and in one sense to the family honour, and—so there's nothing else to be done."

Marian sat quietly for a minute, before she said, "Not having had the honour of belonging to an old family so extensively stocked with traditions, not even having married into one, I am perhaps scarcely able to understand your position, Mr. Benthall. But it occurs to me that 'progress' is a word which I have heard not unfrequently mentioned in connexion with the principles for the support of which you seem prepared to go to the stake, and it seems to me an impossible word to be used by those who maintain a set of political opinions simply because they received them from their ancestors."

"Oh, of course it is not merely that! Of course I myself hold and believe in them!"

"Sufficiently to let that belief influence your actions at a rather important period of your life? See here, Mr. Benthall; it happens to be my wish, my very strong wish, that my husband should be returned for Brocksopp at this election. I do not hide from myself that his return is by no means certain, that it is necessary that every vote should be secured. Now, there are certain farmers, holding land in connexion with the charity under which the school was founded—there is no intended harm in my use of the word, for my father was paid out of it as well as you, remember—farmers who, holding the charity land, look to the master of the school, with an odd kind of loyalty, as their head, and, in such matters as an election, would, I imagine, come to him for advice how to act. Am I right?"

"Perfectly right."

"You know this by experience? They have been to you?"

"Some of them waited on me at the school-house several days ago!"

"And you made them pledge themselves to support Mr.—Mr. Joyce?"

"No, Mrs. Creswell, I am a schoolmaster and a clergyman, *not* an electioneering agent. I explained to them to the best of my power the views taken by each party on the great question of the day, and, when asked a direct question as to how I should myself vote, I answered it—that was all."

"All, indeed! It is sufficient to show me that these unthinking people will follow you to the polling-booth like sheep! However, to return to what I was about to say when I thought of these farmers; is your belief in your attachment to these principles so strong as to allow them to influence your actions at what may be an important period of your life? I know the Helmingham school-salary, Mr. Benthall; I know the life—Heaven knows I ought, after all the years of its weariness and its drudgery which I witnessed. You are scarcely in your proper place, I think! I can picture you to myself in a pleasant rectory in a southern or western county, with a charming wife by your side!"

"A most delightful idea, Mrs. Creswell, but one impossible of realisation in my case, I am afraid!"

"By no means so impossible as you seem to imagine. I have only to say one word to my husband, and——"

"My dear Mrs. Creswell," said Mr. Benthall, rising, and laying his hand lightly on her arm, "pray excuse my interrupting you; but I am sure you don't know what you are saying, or doing! Ladies have no idea of this kind of thing; they don't understand it, and we cannot explain. I can only say that if any man had—well, I should not have hesitated a moment in knocking him down!" And Mr. Benthall, whose manner was disturbed, whose voice trembled, and whose face was very much flushed, was making rapidly to the door, when Marian called him back.

"I am sorry," she said, very calmly, "that our last interview should have been so disagreeable. You will understand that, under present circumstances, your visits here, and your acquaintance with any of the inmates of this house, must cease."

Mr. Benthall looked as though about to speak, but he merely bowed and left the room. When the door closed behind him, Marian sank down into her chair, and burst into a flood of bitter tears. It was

the second repulse she had met with that day, and she had not been accustomed to repulses, of late.

THE OMNIBUS IN LONDON AND IN PARIS.

MOST persons who have sojourned in the capitals of England and France, and have availed themselves of the commercial comforts proper to either city, must have noted that the spacious and commodious vehicle, to which from its catholic capacities the name "omnibus" has been applied in both countries, plays a much more important part in Paris than in London. It is not too much to say that in the former you can go from anywhere to anywhere else, at a price which is not varied by the length of your journey, whereas, in the latter, there is not only a variation of charge, but there are many points which, from certain other points, cannot be reached by omnibus at all. In Paris all classes are alike accommodated; in London the most favoured class consists of the persons who have business in the city. On this account the Bank of England, as a city focus, can be reached from almost any district you could name, inhabited by business men, and on this account likewise the privileges of the Bank of England are exceptional.

The result of the London system, or rather want of system, is a great diversity in the small assemblies that travel at different hours by the same omnibuses. At the time when city men leave their residences at the West-end or in the suburbs, the vehicles which they use are crowded, and the same phenomenon is observed when the time for returning home has arrived. These city men comprise employers as well as clerks, and thus nine and ten A.M. and four and five P.M., or thereabouts, may be termed the aristocratic hours for those omnibuses that ply to and from the Bank of England, the morning hours being considered in reference to those who seek, and the afternoon hours to those who leave that important point. During the intermediate hours, and at those very hours when the course of the omnibus is contrary to the course of business, the travellers belong for the most part to a far humbler class, and are by no means numerous. And with the omnibuses that do not ply city-wards this is almost always the case. Indeed, with the exception of persons who for some important reason are impelled towards the centre of traffic, every one who is in the slightest degree opulent and luxurious makes a point of patronising the more expensive cab. The cab will at any rate take us to any point we may choose to name, whereas the choice for the travellers by the omnibus is limited. Of course, we leave out of the account the state of traffic on Sundays and holidays, when the omnibuses that ply to and from the city are almost empty, and those that convey the passengers to Richmond, and other places of pleasant resort, are full.

Now, in Paris the travellers by omnibus are

much more numerous, and comprise throughout the day a much more opulent class of persons than those who use a similar mode of locomotion in London. This fact may be ascribed, in a great measure, to a system of so-called "correspondances," by means of which there is scarcely a point in Paris which is not connected with every other. When the point which the traveller desires to reach lies in the direct line of the omnibus which he takes, there is, of course, no difference between the practices of the two countries. It is when the point lies apart from the track of the omnibus that the difference begins. In that case the London traveller must consider where he must get out to complete his pilgrimage to the desired spot. He may perhaps be aware of an intermediate point, whence another omnibus will proceed to it directly; or he may be convinced that a cab or a tedious journey on foot will be indispensable. At all events, a judicious choice of the course he ought to pursue demands an amount of topographical knowledge which cannot be expected in a casual visitor to the capital, or even in those confirmed Cockneys whose London movements have been confined to a beaten track.

The difficulty here indicated is met by the French system of "correspondances." Paris is dotted all over with omnibus stations, which for some vehicles are starting points, for others houses of call. To one of these the traveller proceeds, in the first instance, and tells the official personage he finds there whether he desires to go. If the spot does not lie in the route of the omnibus at this station, he is furnished not only with a ticket for his place, but another ticket entitling him to a seat in another omnibus, which he will enter at an intermediate station, and, thence proceeding, will complete his journey. Let us make matters intelligible to purely British traders, by imagining a similar arrangement in London. The traveller, being at the Bank of England, would proceed to Russell-square—a journey which, according to the actual system, is altogether impossible. He would find a station erected (say) by the Wellington statue, and, armed with a "correspondance," would take an Oxford-street omnibus. The conductor would set him down at the most convenient intermediate station, which would be at the corner of the Gray's Inn-road or Southampton-street, and there he would find another omnibus, which would take him to Russell-square, or its immediate vicinity. This journey costs him no more than it would have done had the square in question lain on the route of the first vehicle. The uniform fare from any given point to any other is thirty centimes, or three-pence, for an inside place; twenty centimes, or twopence, for a seat on the roof. The first conductor alone receives money; the second receives, in its stead, the correspondance ticket.

As crowding at French theatres is prevented by a regulation which compels every one to follow those who have reached the entrance before him, so that first come is sure to be first

served, however strong the will and the muscles of second come may be; so also is crowding into omnibuses prevented, though by a more elaborate arrangement. In a Parisian omnibus there are fourteen inside seats and twelve seats on the roof; and the tickets are inscribed with numbers corresponding to this capacity, and must be used in rotation. For instance, the ticket you obtain at the station is numbered nine. The omnibus that is about to start may have two vacant places, and if persons armed with tickets numbered seven and eight are not yet accommodated, their claim will be preferred to yours, and you must await the arrival of the next omnibus, when you will find yourself similarly privileged with regard to number ten. When the vehicle is empty, or comparatively empty, this ticket system is not regarded. You may enter it without visiting the station at all, and the conductor, when you pay him the fare, will furnish you with correspondance tickets, if these are required.

If we have made the French plan intelligible to our readers, they will at once perceive that in Paris the use of the omnibus is open to a larger number of persons than in London. We are compelled, in fairness, to admit that the city man, whose course is invariably from a populous suburb to the Bank, will find an advantage in the London system to which there is nothing comparable in Paris. Here we have direct routes only, from which we have no occasion to deviate, and probably in Paris there is no omnibus route at once so long and so direct as that which lies between Paddington and the Bank of England. In Paris the travellers who use correspondances are as much considered as anybody else, and these must be set down at the most convenient stations before the vehicle which they have entered in the first instance completes its journey. Hence there is much roundabout travelling unknown in England, the omnibus sometimes proceeding southward, and then again northward, as if the place of final destination inscribed on the vehicle had been forgotten on the route. In short, the slight convenience of the few is sacrificed to the great convenience of the many, and this sacrifice the city gentleman, who belongs to the few par excellence, will probably not be disposed to admire.

At the principal omnibus stations in Paris a little book is sold in which the merits of the English and French systems are compared in a very equitable way, on data obtained in the year 1866. Its author is M. C. Lavollée, an administrator of the Omnibus Company of Paris, who evidently speaks rather in an official than in a personal capacity, and its object is partly to show that the capitalist will find French omnibus shares a more profitable investment than the shares of the English company. With this object we have nothing to do. Those facts, which as presented by M. C. Lavollée, concern the general public—the people who trust their persons to the vehicle, not the persons who trust their money to the enterprise—alone come under our consideration.

According to M. C. Lavollée—who always speaks, be it remembered, with the year 1866 before his eyes—the number of lines taken by the General Omnibus Company of London, whose pre-eminence above other omnibus proprietors is incontestable, is sixty-eight. But he remarks that these lines would not be considered so many from a French point of view. When one route is the mere continuation of another, these, according to the French routes, constitute but one line; whereas, it is otherwise here. Nor does the competition of the other omnibus proprietors necessarily bring with it increased accommodation to the people of London, inasmuch as several vehicles, independent of each other, frequently take the same route, while some districts are altogether unprovided. An observation made on London Bridge on the 23rd of May, 1865, gave a transit of three thousand nine hundred omnibuses between the hours of nine A.M. and eleven P.M., that is to say, about two hundred and seventy-eight per hour, and more than four per minute. An observation made on Westminster Bridge on the 11th of the following June, and consequently in precisely the same season, gave a transit, between the corresponding hours, of five hundred and forty omnibuses, that is to say, about thirty-eight per hour. These statistics forcibly illustrate what we have said above with regard to favoured routes.

In London the omnibuses begin to run between the hours of seven and eight in the morning, and some of the latest return home after midnight. But they are only in full activity from ten A.M. until between nine and ten P.M., after which latter hour there are no omnibuses running, save those bound for the remote suburbs. These are the statements made by M. Lavollée. It is bold to question so careful an observer, but we cannot help remarking that ten o'clock in the morning seems rather a late hour for the commencement of expeditions to the city, and we know how important these are in promoting omnibus traffic.

In Paris the omnibuses begin to run before seven A.M., and most of the lines continue till after midnight. Sunday increases the French and diminishes the English traffic. This fact does not touch the question of accommodation, but is to be attributed to the different habits of the two countries.

The number of passengers carried by one vehicle is exactly the same in the two capitals, viz., twenty-six; but the distribution is different, inasmuch as there are twelve inside places in the London, and fourteen in the Parisian omnibus. Attempts have been made in Paris to find room for two additional outside passengers, and this would, of course, increase the total number to twenty-eight.

The London omnibus, when empty, weighs only twelve hundred and fifty kilogrammes, whereas the Parisian vehicle weighs sixteen hundred and twenty or sixteen hundred and thirty, the former figure corresponding to the newer, the latter to the older construction.

(The kilogramme, it may be observed, is equal to rather less than two pounds and a quarter avoirdupois). This apparent advantage on the English side is attributed not only to the greater number of passengers accommodated inside the French vehicle, but also to the fact that nearly two inches more space is allowed for each person. Additional causes of the weight of the Paris omnibus are to be found in the dial, which registers the entrance of each passenger; four lanterns, against which we can only set off a small inside lamp; and a casing of sheet iron, used to lessen the damage caused by collisions. To the dial which we have just mentioned, and which in French is called "cadran," there is nothing analogous in this country. All who know anything of Paris, are familiar with it as a matter of course; for those, not so privileged, the simple statement will suffice, that it is an apparatus worked by the mere entrance of the passengers, and that, as it records the number of travellers by mechanical means, over which the conductor has no control, it necessarily makes fraud on his part a sheer impossibility. We learn from M. Lavollée that an attempt to introduce this useful institution by the General Omnibus Company of London was effectually resisted, not only by the conductors but also by the public. The fact is curious. That the conductors disliked such an application of practical science to the prevention of petty fraud seems natural enough; and if one of those useful members of society were represented on the stage of a transpontine theatre, slapping his left side, and declaring that the honour of a poor man was far superior to machinery, we have not the slightest doubt that a hearty round of applause would manifest the satisfaction of the gallery. But why the public, who are by no means the necessary allies of the conductor, should be equally sensitive on the subject, we cannot at all understand. Is it possible that the sharp tinkle, which marks the action of the machine, is found objectionable to fastidious ears?

This odd sympathy between passengers and conductors seems more difficult to explain, if we consider that in London the passengers can easily be defrauded by the conductor, whereas in Paris the conductor can cheat no one. The passenger in the French omnibus knows that however far he goes, he has only to pay thirty centimes (threepence) if he travels inside, and twenty (twopence) if he sits on the roof; but there is no such uniformity in England, where prices are roughly measured by distance. The absence of uniformity favours imposition on travellers in general and on foreigners in particular, as M. Lavollée shrewdly observes, his remark being probably grounded on his own personal experience. The interior of the London omnibus is indeed decorated with a certain tin placard, on which the tariff of prices, as regulated by distance, is stated in the blackest black and the whitest white. But how many are the persons, English or foreign, who can exactly comprehend the tariff?

The rapidity of the London omnibus exceeds that of the Parisian, the former travelling at the rate of from five to six English miles an hour (seldom six), that is to say, of from eight to nine and a half kilometres, whereas seven and a half kilometres is the extent of the French rate. To reduce this fact to its proper value, we should recollect that the English is, as we have said, lighter than the French vehicle, and take other circumstances into consideration. The slopes in London are less formidable, the streets are wider, and the passages are less numerous than in Paris. Stoppages are also less frequent. The system of "correspondances" forces the French omnibus to stop at various stations, thus causing a slight inconvenience, which is to be taken into account when the two systems are balanced with each other.

When M. Lavollée compares the number of omnibus travellers in Paris with those in London during 1866, the advantage is unquestionably on the side of the former. Confining his observations to the London General Omnibus Company, he tells us, that whereas the company with six hundred and two vehicles carried during the year forty-four millions three hundred and fifty thousand passengers, the Paris company, with six hundred and twenty-five vehicles carried one hundred and seven millions two hundred and two thousand, that is to say, considerably more than double the number. The searcher after truth will, like M. Lavollée, balance this fact with the circumstance, that in Paris there is nothing analogous to the penny-steamboat, or to the Metropolitan and North London Railways. The steamers which connect all the important points on the left bank of the Thames from London Bridge to Chelsea may easily be overlooked by many of the sojourners in London, but their importance, derived from rapidity and extreme cheapness, is immense.

The accidents that occur in Paris, through the employment of the omnibus, are, according to M. Lavollée, more numerous than those that take place in London. To account for this difference he finds several reasons. In the first place, the streets of our capital are broader and straighter than those of Paris, and the advantage on the side of London is not counterbalanced by the crowd of vehicles which are seen daily in the city, but which diminishes at a very early hour in the evening. In the second place, M. Lavollée admits that both in skill and temper, the English drivers are far superior to the French, and have to deal with more docile horses. A third cause of accident is the number of trucks and light carts frequently driven by women, which in Paris is greater than in London, and leads to collisions by which the weaker side suffers. Fourthly—and this is an advantage on the side of London, which at once strikes every Englishman at the very first walk which he takes in Paris, unless he confines himself to the Boulevards and such novelties as the Rue de Rivoli—our streets are, with exceptions scarcely worth noting, uniformly pro-

vided with foot-pavements on each side of the road, whereas, in many of the streets of the French capital, there is no such thing as a distinct path for pedestrians, but horse and foot move in the same track, the latter taking care of themselves as best they may. In the opinion of M. Lavollée, this Parisian order, or rather disorder of things, leads to a general habit of carelessness, which does not exist in London. The Briton, accustomed to find his foot-pavement everywhere, never thinks of leaving it; the Gaul, forced in many cases to dispense with this luxury, does not always take advantage of it when it is offered, and hence the carriage-roads of Paris are often thronged with pedestrians, even where especial accommodation has been provided for them.

Conning over the facts thus briefly enumerated, and perhaps consulting also his own personal experience, the reader will perceive at a glance, that if the French streets were widened and uniformly provided with foot-pavements, the French drivers were better trained, and the traffic in light carts were diminished, the comparison between London and Paris would show an unqualified advantage on the side of the latter, and, moreover, that the allowances made in favour of England were but trifling after all.

Why, then, should we not adopt the Parisian mode without hesitation?

This question is not to be answered without grave deliberation. The great efficiency of the Parisian scheme, and the perfection of its system of correspondances, are the results of a monopoly; all the omnibuses in the French capital belonging to one company, with whom it is unlawful to compete. Now, to every thinking Englishman the very word monopoly is suggestive of fallacy, and whenever a particular case arises where protection in any form seems to have an advantage over free competition, he will doubt whether a partial benefit is to be sought by the sacrifice of a grand principle. Who can say that, properly developed, the London system of free competition may not ultimately attain in the small matter of the omnibus, the same degree of perfection that in Paris is enforced by monopoly?

NOBODY ABROAD.

VERY early in this present century, that is to say, in the month of October, 1801, it occurred to MR. NOBODY to visit the famous city of Paris. According to the Republican calendar, which then obtained among our neighbours, the month was not October, and the year was not 1801. The month was Brumaire, and the year was Ten of the Republic one and indivisible. But Mr. Nobody being an Englishman, the non-republican computation of time and season may be adopted. I call my traveller Mr. Nobody because I have not the slightest idea who he was, whence he came, or whither—when he returned from his Parisian tour—he went. He was certainly not Tom

Paine, but I am not prepared to assert that he might not have been the author of Junius, taking a shady and secretive holiday, according to his inscrutable wont. He wrote a book about his travels, entitled, "A Rough Sketch of Modern Paris," and he caused it to be published anonymously, in a thin octavo, by a bookseller in St. Paul's-churchyard. He did not even favour the public with his initials, or with three asterisks, or with a Greek or Roman pseudonyme. At the end of four pages of preface he signs himself "the author," which, in default of any other explanation, is, to say the least, baffling. To increase the bewilderment of posterity, the work of this occult traveller takes the form of a series of letters, addressed to a friend, who is qualified as "My Dear Sir;" but who "My Dear Sir" was is unknown to Everybody—except Nobody. At the conclusion of each of his letters Mr. Nobody observes, "As soon as I have anything to communicate, I shall write again. In the mean time I take my leave, and am, &c." What are you to do with an author who persists in saying that he is *et cetera*?

Mr. Nobody, however, is not to be neglected: for two reasons: the first, that he has drawn a very curious and interesting picture of Paris, as it appeared to an Englishman during the brief peace, or rather truce, of Amiens; the second that, his obstinate anonymity notwithstanding, Mr. Nobody's pages are fruitful of internal evidence that he must have been Somebody, and somebody of note, too. He had a wife who shared his pleasures and his hardships. He was on visiting terms with His Britannic Majesty's ambassador in Paris, and was presented at the Tuileries. Mrs. Nobody even dined there. Finally, he took his own carriage abroad with him, and his letters of credit on his bankers were illimitable.

On the twenty-sixth of October he left the York House at Dover, and embarked on board a neutral vessel, which he was compelled to hire, no English packet-boat being yet permitted to enter a French port. After a smooth and pleasant passage of four hours, Mr. Nobody found himself at Calais. As soon as the vessel entered the port, two Custom House officers in military uniform came on board, and took down the names of the passengers. One of them retired, to make his report to the municipality of Calais, while the other remained on board to prevent any of the passengers from landing. While the French douanier was on shore, Calais pier was crowded by spectators, the greater part of whom were military men. They seemed to derive great gratification from staring at the English ladies, and from examining the body of Mr. Nobody's carriage, which was hung on the deck of the ship; while Mr. N. himself was equally entertained with the great *moustaches*—the italics are his own—of the grenadiers, the wooden shoes of the peasants, and the close caps of the grisettes.

The douanier returning on board, Mr. Nobody and suite were permitted to touch the

territory of the republic, and, escorted by a guard of bourgeois, desperately ragged as to uniform, were marched from the quay to the Custom House, from the Custom House to the mayor, and from the mayor to the Commissary of Police. At each of these offices, examinations—oral, impedimental, and personal—were made. Mr. Nobody was fain not only to surrender his passport, but also his pocket-book and letters. The last-named were returned on the following day. These little police amenities coming to an end about seven p.m., Mr. Nobody was then free to sit down to an excellent dinner at the celebrated hotel formerly kept by Dessein, now succeeded by his nephew Quillacq—a very respectable man, who met Mr. N. at landing, and, with the utmost civility and attention, took care of his carriage and baggage. The Unknown wished to set out on the following morning for Paris, but, according to respectable M. Quillacq, that was a simple impossibility; for, although the Unmentioned had brought with him a passport in due form from M. de Talleyrand, countersigned by M. Otto, the French minister in London, and backed by his Britannic Majesty's own gracious licence to travel in foreign parts, it was necessary to have all these documents exchanged for a *laissez-passer* from the mayor of Paris.

Mr. N. accordingly passed the whole of the next day in Calais, and on Wednesday morning, accompanied by "Mrs. —," he left Calais, with post-horses. Why won't he call her his *Araminta*, or his *Sophonisba*? *Betsy Jane*, even, would be preferable to this colourless "Mrs. —". The roads were very bad, particularly near Boulogne; the posting charges were moderate—six livres, or five shillings, a stage of five miles;—say a shilling a mile. How much is first-class fare by the Great Northern of France, in 1869? About twopence-half-penny.

Montreuil, where the travellers were to sleep, was not reached until sunset. Here was found excellent accommodation "at the inn celebrated by Sterne." The Reverend Mr. Yorick seems to have been the Murray of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the present one, and it is astonishing that his publishers did not put forth an advertising edition of the *Sentimental Journey*. At Montreuil, Mr. N. (the rogue!), in true Yorick-like spirit, noticed "the smiling attention of two very pretty girls who acted as waiters." He omits to state whether Mrs. — noticed their smiling attention. The next day, through a fine country and bad roads, Amiens was reached. The cultivation by the wayside was good; the peasants were well clad; the beggars were numerous. The waiters, postboys, and landlords, were everywhere remarkably civil, and expressed their joy at seeing "*Milords Anglais*" once more among them. Can Mr. Nobody have been a Nobleman, and Mrs. — only a shallow delusion veiling an actual Ladyship? His Lordship—I mean his Nonentity—remarked that the lower classes were more respectful than before the revolution. The reason appeared to him

obvious. The old nobility treated their inferiors with jocular familiarity—the familiarity which, it may be, bordered on contempt—and the inferiors, mere thralls and bondsmen as they were, took trifling verbal liberties with their lords. Did not something akin to this prevail in Scotland during the last century, and is it not very well illustrated in Dean Ramsay's story of the Scotch lord who picks up a farthing in the sight of a beggar? "Earl!" cries out the gaberlunzie man, "gie us the siller." "Na, na," replies his lordship, pocketing the coin, "fin' a baubee for yoursel', puir bodie." When the social gulf between classes is unfathomable, do we not sometimes affect to shake hands across it? But when we stand foot to foot—"mensch zu mensch," as Schiller has it—on the same earth, do we not often feel inclined to shake our fists in each other's faces? "The loss of their rank," observes Mr. Nobody, "has compelled the higher classes to command respect by a distance of manner, which has, of course, produced a similar course of conduct in the persons beneath them." But for that mercurial date—1801—one would think that Mr. Nobody had travelled in the State of Virginia since the abolition of slavery. The planters are no longer hail fellow well met with their serfs, and enfranchised Sambo no longer addresses the white man as "Mas'r," but as "Sa." Liberty is a wonderful teacher of etiquette.

At Amiens the Unknown drove to the Hôtel d'Angleterre, where he was magnificently and miserably lodged. The windows and doors declined to keep out the wind and rain; the fires were bad, and the supper was worse; nor was the final touch of extravagant charges wanting. The journey was resumed on Friday morning; the beauty of the country and the badness of the roads increasing at every step. At length the weary travellers clattered into Chantilly, found a comfortable bed, and, on Saturday morning, visited the "magnificent ruins" of the Palace of Chantilly. The superb edifice of the stables only remained intact. The government of the First Consul had forbidden the sale of these buildings, and the mistress of the inn told Mr. Nobody, with tears in her eyes, that had Napoleon been at the head of affairs only six months sooner, the palace also would have been rescued from destruction.

A little way out of Chantilly, a fine paved road commenced, extending to Paris, which city Mr. Nobody reached at two P.M. on Saturday. He had been three and a half days and three nights on the road. At the Paris barrier, passports were asked for, but were at once and civilly returned. "Carriages," Mr. N. adds, "are no longer stopped, as formerly, in every town, to be searched for contraband goods; but turnpikes are numerous and expensive." On entering Paris, the travellers drove to several hotels before they could procure accommodation, and such as they at last found was wretched. Many of the hotels had been stripped during the revolution, and had

not been refurnished; and the few remaining in proper gear were crowded by foreigners, who, since the peace, had flocked hither in vast numbers from every country in the world. Mr. Nobody very strongly advises persons intending to visit Paris to write some days beforehand to their correspondents, if they desire to be comfortably lodged on their arrival. The Mysterious Man was not, however, disheartened by the badness of the inn. So soon as he had changed his attire, he hastened to call on M. Perregaux, his banker, who, notwithstanding his recent promotion to the rank of senator, was as civil and obliging as ever. Mr. Nobody *must* have been Somebody. See how civil everybody was to him!

I have been an unconscionable time bringing this shadowy friend of mine from Calais to Paris; but I hold this record of his experiences to be somewhat of the nature of a Text, on which a lay-sermon might be preached to the great edification of modern, fretful, and grumbling travellers. "Young sir," I would say, were it my business to preach, the which, happily, it is not: "modern young British tourist, take account of the four days' sufferings of Mr. Nobody and Mrs. Dash, and learn patience and contentment. Some eighty hours did they pass in hideous discomfort, on dolorous roads, or in unseemly hosteleries. Much were they baited anent passports: much were they exercised in consequence of the stiff-neckedness of that proud man the mayor of Calais. How many times, for aught we know, may not their linchpins have disappeared, their traces snapped, their axles parted? Who shall say but that their postilions, although civil, smelt fearfully of garlic, and (especially during the stages between Beauvais and St. Denis) became partially overcome by brandy? St. Denis has always been notorious for the worst brandy in Europe. And the dust! And the beggars! But for the 'smiling attentions' of those two pretty waiter girls at Montreuil, I tremble to think upon what might have been the temper of Mr. Nobody when he found himself, at last, in Paris. Thus he of 1801. This is how your grandpapa, your uncle William, went to Paris; but how fares it with you, my young friend? You designed, say on Friday afternoon last, to take three days' holiday. You would have a 'run over to Paris,' you said. You dined at six P.M. on Friday at the Junior Juvenal Club, Pall-mall. You smoked your habitual cigar; you played your usual game of billiards after dinner. It was many minutes after eight when you found yourself, with a single dressing-bag for luggage, at Charing-cross terminus. You took a 'first-class return' for Paris; for which you paid, probably, much less than Mr. Nobody disbursed for the passage of himself and his high-hung carriage (to say nothing of Mrs. Dash) from Dover to Calais. A couple of hours of the express train's fury brought you, that Friday night, to Dover—brought you to the Admiralty pier, to the very verge and brink of the much-sounding sea, and bundling you, so to speak, down some slippery steps, sent

you staggering on board a taut little steamer, which, having gorged certain mail-bags, proceeded to fight her way through the biggest waves. In two hours afterwards you were at Calais. No passports, no botheration with municipalities, commissaires, or stiff-necked mayors awaited you. Another express train waited for you, giving you time to despatch a comfortable supper; and by seven o'clock on Saturday morning you were in Paris. You went to the Porte St. Martin on Saturday night, and to Mabille afterwards. On Sunday I hope you went to church, and perhaps you went to Versailles. On Monday you had a good deal of boulevard shopping to get through, for your sisters, or for the Mrs. Dash of the future; and, after a comfortable five o'clock dinner at the Café Riche on Monday afternoon, you found yourself shortly after seven P.M. at the Chemin de Fer du Nord, and, by six o'clock on Tuesday morning, you were back again at Charing-cross or at Victoria. Arrived there, you had yet a florin and a fifty centime piece left of the change for a ten-pound note. And yet you murmur and grumble. You have spoken heresy against the harbour-master of Dover. You have hurled bitter words at the directors of the South-Eastern Railway Company, and have made mock of the London, Chatham, and Dover. Thrice have you threatened to write to the Times. Once did you propose to 'punch' the head of an obnoxious waiter at the Calais buffet." To this purport I could say a great deal if I preached sermons.

My esteemed friend Mr. Nobody abode in Paris for full six months; but the amount of sight-seeing he went through was so vast and his account thereof is so minute that, for reasons of space, I do not dare to follow him from each Parisian pillar to its corresponding post. I can only briefly note that he attended a sitting of the legislative body in the ci-devant Palais Bourbon, and that he paid five francs for admission to the gallery. Drums and fifes announced the approach of the legislators, and a guard of honour, consisting of an entire regiment, escorted them. The president having taken the chair, more drums and fifes proclaimed the arrival of three counsellors of state, bearing a message from the government. These high republican functionaries were preceded by ushers wearing Spanish hats with tri-coloured plumes; the counsellors themselves were dressed in scarlet cloth, richly embroidered. They ascended the tribune, read their message, and made three separate speeches on the subject of honour, glory, and France; whereafter the legislative body, with loud cries of "Vive le Premier Consul!" "Vive Madame Bonaparte!" separated. It was the last day of the session. Abating the scarlet coats and the Spanish hats of the huissiers, the break up of a parliamentary session in 1801 must have very closely resembled that which we see in the French Corps Législatif, in 1869. Mr. Nobody went away much pleased, especially with the admiration bestowed by his neighbours in the gallery on Lord Cornwallis, who

was present among the corps diplomatique, and for whom Mr. Nobody seems himself to have entertained an affection bordering on adoration. "Yes, yes," cried an enthusiastic republican near him, "That tall man is Milord Cornwallis. He has a fine figure. He looks like a military man. He has served in the army. Is it not true, sir? Look at that little man near him. What a difference! What a mean appearance!"

Mr. Nobody was in one aspect an exceptional Englishman. He appears to have been imbued with a sincere admiration for the talents of Napoleon Bonaparte, and even to have had some liking for the personal character of that individual. "My dear sir," he writes to that Nameless friend of his on the sixth of December, "my curiosity is at length gratified. I have seen Bonaparte. You will readily conceive how much pleasure I felt to-day in beholding, for the first time, this extraordinary man, on whose exertions the fate of France, and in many respects that of Europe, may be said to depend." Mr. N. was fortunate enough to obtain places in the apartments of Duroc, governor of the Tuileries, from which he witnessed a review in the Carrousel. The Consular, soon to become the Imperial, Guard were inspected by the Master of France, then in the thirty-third year of his age. He was mounted on a white charger. As he passed several times before Mr. Nobody's window, that Impalpability had ample leisure to observe him; and it appears to me that the portrait he has drawn of the First Consul, then in the full flush of his fame, undarkened by D'Enghien's murder, Pichegru's imputed end, and Josephine's divorce, is sufficient to rescue Mr. Nobody's notes from oblivion. "His complexion," writes the Unknown, "is remarkably sallow: his countenance expressive, but stern; his figure lithe, but well made; and his whole person, like the mind which it contains, singular and remarkable. If I were compelled to compare him to any one, I should name Kemble, the actor. Though Bonaparte is less in size, and less handsome than that respectable performer, yet, in the construction of the features and the general expression, there is a strong resemblance. The picture of Bonaparte at the review, exhibited some time back in Piccadilly,* and the bust in Sèvres china, which is very common in Paris, and has probably become equally so in London" (it was soon to be superseded by Gillray's monstrous caricatures of the Corsican Ogre), "are the best likenesses I have seen. As to his dress, he wore the grand costume of his office, that is to say, a scarlet velvet coat, profusely embroidered with gold. To this he had added leather breeches, jockey boots, and a little

* This picture was by Carle Vernet, the father of Horace, and was exhibited at Fores's—ancestor of the present well-known print-seller. At Fores's, just eight years previously, had been on view an engraving of the execution of Louis the Sixteenth, by Isaac Cruikshank (father of our George), and a "working model" of the guillotine.

plain cocked-hat, the only ornament to which was a national cockade. His hair, unpowdered, was cut close to his neck." Now this (excuse the anachronism) is a perfect photograph, and might serve as a guide to any English artist desirous of emulating as a Napoleographer, the achievements of Meissonnier or Gerome. We have had, from English painters, Napoleon in blue, in green, in a grey great-coat, in his purple coronation robes, even in the striped nankeen suit of his exile on the Rock. But the great enemy of England in scarlet! the vanquished of Waterloo in a red coat! But for Mr. Nobody's testimony I should just as soon have imagined George the Third with a Phrygian cap over his wig, or the Right Honourable William Pitt weathering the storm as a sans culotte.

Again did Mr. Nobody see the Corsican, and at his own house—in the audience hall of the Tuileries. Mr. Jackson was minister plenipotentiary from England prior to Lord Whitworth's coming; and to Mr. Jackson did Mr. Nobody apply to obtain presentation at the court of the First Consul. His name—*what* was his name?—being accordingly sent in to Citizen Talleyrand, three years afterwards to be Prince of Beneventum, minister of foreign affairs, Mr. N. drove to the Tuileries at three o'clock in the afternoon, and was ushered into a small apartment on the ground-floor, called the Saloon of the Ambassadors, where the foreign ministers and their respective countrymen waited until Napoleon was ready to receive them. Chocolate, sherbet, and liqueurs in abundance having been handed around—a hint for St. James's Palace in '69—the doors, after an hour's interval, were thrown open, and the guests ascended the grand staircase, which was lined by grenadiers with their arms grounded. Passing through four or five rooms, in each of which was an officer's guard, who saluted the strangers, the cortège came into the presence chamber. Here stood Bonaparte, between Cambacérès, the second, and Lebrun, the third consul. The triumvirs were all in full fig of scarlet velvet and gold. The generals, senators, and counsellors of state who surrounded Napoleon made way for the foreigners, and a circle was immediately formed, the nationalities ranging themselves behind their proper ministers. The Austrian ambassador stood on the right of the First Consul; next to him Mr. Jackson; then Count Lucchesini, the Prussian minister; and next to him the Hereditary Prince of Orange, who was to be presented that day, and who was not to meet Napoleon again until Waterloo. In compliment to the Dutch prince, Napoleon, contrary to his practice, began the audience on his side the circle. He spoke some time to the son of the deposed Stadtholder, and seemed anxious to make his awkward and extraordinary situation as little painful to him as possible. According to Mr. Nobody, the Napoleonic blandishments were lost on his Batavian highness, who was sulky and silent. In passing *each foreign minister, the First Consul received the individuals of each respective nation with*

the greatest ease and dignity. Where had he learnt all this ease and dignity, this young soldier of thirty-two? From the goatherds of Corsica? From the snuffy old priests who were his tutors at Brienne? From the bombardiers at Toulon? In the camps of Italy? From the Sphinx in Egypt? From Talma the actor, who, when the conqueror was poor, had often given him the dinner he lacked? When it came to Mr. Jackson's turn, sixteen English were presented. After he had spoken to five or six of their number, Napoleon remarked, "with a smile which is peculiarly his own, and which changes a countenance usually stern into one of great mildness: 'I am delighted to see here so many English. I hope our union may be of long continuance. We are the two most powerful and most civilised nations in Europe. We should unite to cultivate the arts, and sciences, and letters; in short, to improve the happiness of human nature.'" In about two years after this interview, Englishmen and Frenchmen were cultivating the arts and sciences, and doing their best to improve the happiness of human nature, by cutting each other's throats in very considerable numbers. Did Napoleon really mean what he said? Was he really anxious to be our friend, if we would only let him? Or was he then, and all times, a Prodigious Humbug?

Mrs. Dash was to have her share in the hospitalities of the Tuileries. Returning home from viewing the sights one afternoon at half-past four o'clock, Mr. N. found a messenger who was the bearer of an invitation to Mrs. Dash, asking her to dinner that very day at five. The lady dressed in haste, and drove to the palace. She returned, enraptured. The entertainment was elegant; the sight superb. More than two hundred persons sat down to dinner in a splendid apartment. The company consisted, besides Napoleon's family, of the ministers, the ambassadors, several generals, senators, and other constituted authorities. There were only fifteen ladies present. All the English ladies who had been presented to Madame Bonaparte were asked; but only two of their number remained in Paris. The dinner was served entirely on gold and silver plate, and Sevres china; the latter bearing the letter B on every dish; the central plateau was covered with moss, out of which arose innumerable natural flowers, the odour of which perfumed the whole room. The First Consul and Madame Bonaparte conversed very affably with those around them. The servants were numerous, splendidly dressed, and highly attentive, and the dinner lasted more than two hours. Seven years ago, the lord of this sumptuous feast had been glad to pick up the crumbs from an actor's table, and vegetated in a garret in Paris, had haunted the ante-chambers of the War Minister in vain, had revolved plans of offering his sword to the Grand Turk if he could only procure a new pair of boots wherein to make his voyage to Constantinople. O the ups and downs of fortune! The First Consul was fated to invite few more Englishmen to dinner. But he was doomed to dine

with us, not as a host, but as an unwilling guest. I can picture him in the cabin of the Northumberland, rising wearily from heavy joints to avoid heavier drinking, and the admiral and his officers scowling at him because he wouldn't stop and take t'other bottle. "The General," pointedly remarked Sir George Cockburn, once when his captive rose from table, and fled from port and sherry, "has evidently not studied politeness in the school of Lord Chesterfield." The poor temperate Italian, to whose pale cheek a single glass of champagne would bring a flush! Yet Mr. Nobody thought him dignity and politeness itself; and my private opinion is that Mr. Nobody knew what was what.

THE OLD WORLD AND THE NEW.

THERE's a checkmate universal
In this blind old world of ours,
The earth has lost its vigour,
Men's brains have lost their powers.
Alas! for the young fruits blighted,
And the flowers that cannot bloom!
Alas! for the lack of air and of sun,
Alas! for the lowering gloom.
Alas! for the thirsty barrens,
And the moors that yield no corn!
Alas! for the lingering harvests,
And the still delaying morn!
By millions starve the beggars
Around the untilled downs,
And the orphans weep in the alleys
Of the rich and sumptuous towns.
There's a checkmate universal,
In this deaf old world of ours,
The earth has lost its vigour,
Men's brains have lost their powers.
Yet I hear an angel crying,
"Away to the Virgin Land,
Away to the boundless prairie,
Fresh from God's shaping hand."
And I see the Eastern sunbeams
Point to the broad free West,
And I watch the sea birds leading
To the golden realms of rest.
There's a checkmate universal,
In this dumb old world of ours,
The earth has lost its vigour,
Men's brains have lost their powers.
Yet I know the flowering prairies
Shall soon roll with the ripening grain,
And the merry streams flow lavish
Over the desert plain.
Break up old types, my brothers,
Pave roads with Pharaoh's bones,
Hew from the pyramids of the Past
The Future's temple stones.

LOOKING IN AT SHOP WINDOWS.

THERE are some persons to whom shop windows afford a perpetual and an inexhaustible feast. They will saunter slowly along the streets for hours, stopping whenever the fancy takes them, and will critically and exhaustively inspect the contents of any window that may strike them, without the least reference to the nature of the articles on view. Such persons will wander

from the window of the photograph dealer to the window of the jeweller, and from the window of the tobacconist to the window of the hair-dresser, deriving equal satisfaction from all. Neither is it necessary that these wanderers should be blessed with abundant leisure. For, although there is doubtless much pleasure to be derived from having plenty of time on your hands, and a long street full of attractive shops before you, there is, perhaps, a keener relish in the contemplation of shop shows when you are pressed for time. More especially is this the case when you are engaged in the transaction of some other person's business. It has been remarked that there is no one more industrious in his attendance at all kinds of street shows than the doctor's boy; while the youth who brings the newspaper from round the corner may frequently be noticed whitening the end of his nose against the windows of the local shops, entirely oblivious of the customer and of the customer's desire for the day's news. This peculiarity may be noticed in all classes of society. You shall meet in Fleet-street, London City, in the morning, the hurrying army of clerks. They walk briskly and with determination, as men having no time to lose. Their eyes are fixed cityward, and to reach their destination appears to be their only aim. Shop windows are the last things they are thinking of. So, at least, it would appear. But follow one of these but a short distance, and you will presently see him start suddenly, take one or two faltering steps, turn abruptly, and make eagerly for a shop just left behind. He doesn't want to buy anything; something in the window has caught his eye, and, at all costs, he must inspect it. It is of little use for him, after this, to attempt to resume the brisk pace of a minute ago. The spell is on him, and he must dawdle and stare, even at the risk of unpunctuality and reproof. So the merchant, his employer, hastening from his office and making for 'Change, frequently pulls up to inspect something that he has no intention whatever of purchasing, totally regardless of the important contracts awaiting completion. At the west end of the town, people have more leisure; but even there business has to be transacted, and the shops at Charing-cross and Parliament-street (notoriously business neighbourhoods), are continually surrounded by respectable gentlemen of all ages, who will clearly be late for the appointments they are on their way to keep. To this noble band of contemplative

observers we are proud to belong. From the earliest periods of our existence we have been the victim of this fascination. In our early youth we fell into the toils of a shop window in a mouldy street—it was mouldy then, and is a shade mouldier now—near Albany-street, Regent's-park, N.W. It was not N.W. then, but it is N.W. now. The shop was a dim little shop inside, and the front had no pretensions to decorative merit of any sort. The window-panes were small, and were cleaned at very remote and uncertain intervals. The window was only to be approached across a terrific grating, from which several bars were missing, and which seemed to be on the point of giving way, and precipitating the boys who always covered it, into the area beneath. Unhallowed smells arose constantly from this area. Water trickled frequently into it from the defective gutter on the roof, after having dropped on the boys on the way. It was altogether scarcely the sort of situation to be selected for a comfortable view. The attractions that chained us to the spot, despite all dangers and difficulties, would not have been obvious to the casual observer. A few cheap weekly illustrated papers, some hoop-sticks and whips, a forlorn doll or so, and two or three bottles of highly coloured sweets would have been the first important objects visible. But it was for none of these articles we cared. It is true that some of the pictures in the weekly miscellanies gratified us exceedingly; the pistol and dagger work in those productions always being dear to the boyish mind. It is also true that, in a general way, we felt no contempt for sweets; but here they were as nothing. Skelt was the attraction of this window. Skelt was the magician who enthralled us. Here were Skelt's treasures in any quantity. Skelt's characters in the Miller and his Men; in my Poll and my Partner Joe, for eighteenpence; in Blue Beard, for two shillings (processions and elephants were expensive even in Skelt); in the Forest of Bondy, delightful play, but difficult to manage, by reason of the impossibilities required to be done by a limp dog; extra sheets of wings, slides, lamps; drop scenes, exquisitely drawn, as we thought, and only awaiting the painter's (our) art to eclipse the feebler productions, as they seemed to us then, of a Stanfield or a Roberts. What a shop window! Didn't we know that that parcel in blue paper contained *blue fire*; that that other parcel, in

red paper, held a powder which, kindled in one of those flat little tin pans yonder, would produce a crimson light, and smoke enough to suffocate our dearest relations and friends? That Dutch metal we knew what to do with; the powdered glass in the jar would (experience told us), make beautiful spangles, if sprinkled over the lightly gummed tunic of Hardiknute in One o'clock, or the Knight and the Wood Demon, and would impart to him a ravishing surface, something between the track of a slug or a snail, and the celestial sheen upon a Bath bun. It was happiness merely to gaze on these treasures, and to feast, in imagination, on the splendour with which the dramas should be produced under our management, as soon as ever (if ever) the treasury should be full enough to justify the preliminary outlay. But if this shop window were delightful to us from the outside, what was it from the inside? Whenever we received from enlightened capitalists, who had proper ideas how boys should be treated, the grateful tip, we flew to Fairy-street, Albany-street (we have forgotten what its real name was then, and the Board of Works has changed it since), and enjoyed ourselves thoroughly. Long consideration was necessary before a decision could be arrived at. A careful manager must not decide rashly. All the plays were earnestly examined. As we remember, we usually selected those in which small characters (supposed to be large characters in perspective) had to cross a bridge, or row in a boat, at the back of the scene. The delight of the stage-direction—"small millers in plate five cross set piece, plate three,"—was intense; and in the Miller's Maid we obeyed the command, "Put on small Giles and George struggling, plate seven," with rapture: albeit, the manual substitution before the eyes of any grown-up critic, of George and Giles struggling, for George and Giles in the highest state of devoted friendship, was usually considered to require explanatory statements from the management not conducive to poetical effect. When the final selection was made, and all our money spent—we took care not to retain a farthing, and if the play were not costly enough, would recklessly buy extra sheets of supers—we had weeks of joyous preparation, followed by a few days of unceasing performance, until we thirsted for fresh managerial triumphs, and would repair once more to Fairy-street to gaze with covetous eyes on fresh Skelts and dramas new. Who was Skelt? Does he still exist, or does his place (where was

it?) know him no more? In the course of our researches in shop windows, we have been pained in these degenerate times by an absence of Skelt's characters and scenes, and fear that boys' theatres, common in our youth, are now but rare. Better or more amusing toy no boy can have, however; and if paint, gum, and lamp-oil, do occasionally play havoc with clothes, still, painting, pasting, and cutting out, have at any rate, the great advantage of ensuring quiet in the house—a point of some importance in a house much blessed with boys. Our shop in Fairy-street knows Skelt no more—has gone out of the trade altogether, as Skelt himself would seem to have done. It is a small greengrocer's now, with an open front full of greens and carrots. Alas! Skelt never dealt in greens and carrots, except in his celebrated scene of "Greengrocer's Shop and Lawyer's Office" in the *Pantomime of Harlequin Philip Quarll*, and then the greens and carrots flew up into the moon, and the moon came down into the greengrocer's window, and rolled (or ought to have rolled, but they were always stiff and wouldn't work) two goggle eyes.

There was a shop in the High-street of the town in which stands the public school where we were supposed to be educated, that was an endless delight to us. Its proprietor was in the sporting line—the young gentlemen of the school were at that time of a sporting turn—and combined the arts of taxidermy with a little ratting, a little pigeon flying, and (our later wisdom suggests) a good deal of poaching. Stuffed animals, which we then thought marvels of life-like art, adorned the windows of this little shop. The celebrated dog Jimmy, holding in his mouth a rat of which he appeared entirely unconscious, gazed at us blandly from behind the glass of his little wooden case; and if it were too obvious that Jimmy's eyes were the products of art and not of nature, yet his skin was beautifully smooth and his teeth were highly satisfactory. Birds, of all sizes and colours, stalked or hovered, behind other glasses, in attitudes eminently impossible, and were eagerly bought up by the young gentlemen with a view to the adornment of their rooms. The fish were not so gratifying; they were very horny and varnishy; but we were always pleased with the ingenious devices of the artist for conveying to our minds the idea that the rigid monster was still lithely disporting himself in his native element. A little sand, a pebble or two, three or four rushes, and some faint blue

lines painted at the back of the box, and there you were! The bottom of the river to the life! There was a little yard behind this shop where were kept rats, owls, dormice, and other small deer charming to the boyish mind. Some of the young gentlemen who were possessed of dogs, used to keep them, as it were at livery, here—not being allowed to keep them in masters' houses—and used to bring their friends here to behold their dogs kill rats: a feat they never accomplished in our time. In a corner was kept for some years an aged badger in a tub, who was intended to be periodically drawn, but who invariably declined the honour, and who, dying, full of years, after we had venerated him for but a few terms, was stuffed and placed (very unlike himself) in the window, to the admiration of all beholders.

Almost next door to this shop was another shop, more delightful than any. It was almost dangerous to look into; it was quite dangerous to go into. It was a smart little tobacconist's. Cigars of, as we now suppose, surprising badness were temptingly displayed in all directions, relieved by pipes, tobacco-jars, pouches, match-boxes, and the various little requirements of the smoker. We all smoked at our seat of learning: more, because it was a high crime and misdemeanour than because we liked it, inasmuch as most of us certainly didn't like it. It was the fashion to obtain the materials here. Moreover, there was a spice of danger about laying in stores at this establishment which was irresistible. It had to be done circumspectly, and with mysterious precautions. Masters might be hovering about; we might be detected. It was very delightful, and there was even a fearful pleasure in gazing in at the window, keeping, with a delicious sense of guilt, a sharp look out for the possible advent of the authorities. The windows of the "sock" shops were very attractive, and much of our time was passed in contemplating the jam tarts, the buns, and the various other articles with which we proposed to go on with the work of ruining our digestions, so soon as Smith major should pay us back that shilling, or we could borrow sixpence from Brown maximus, or persuade the proprietor to extend our tick. A sock shop, be it understood, is a confectioner's. There was one of these establishments which all "our fellows" regarded with secret awe. It was not in our town, but was up the hill in Royalborough across the river. Through its windows we contemplated every kind of

magnificent tart and cake that could excite a boy's appetite. The splendour of the puffs, bursting raspberry jam through crevices in which we noticed a homely likeness to button-holes, nearly drove us to frenzy. Local swells, consuming ices, patties, soups, respecting which forms of refreshment there were maddening legends in the windows, goaded us into insane desires to challenge them to come forth into the street, and have it out, and not sit there, standing nothing for anybody, and gorging themselves like Ogres. We very seldom got further than the window of this particular paradise. Business was conducted on ready-money principles here, and it was the only neighbouring establishment of the kind where we couldn't get tick.

It delights us, now that we have left that school and are a pupil in a wider and a harder one, in which rather more is learnt, to walk down one of the great West-end shop streets in the morning before the whirl of aristocratic purchasers and gazers has set in. The streets are comparatively empty. No roll of carriages disturbs the peripatetic philosopher. There is (we speak of the early summer—the pleasantest time in London) a sprinkling of water going on in front of the shops, which is cool and refreshing. The windows present even greater attractions at such times than they do later in the day. The elegant, but haughty, gentlemen who attend the customers, may now be seen coatless, filling the shop fronts with choice and attractive goods. Likewise, charming young ladies, their hair dressed in the height of the latest fashion, their costumes of the trimmest and neatest, are engaged in the delightful task of dressing the windows. But a gentle melancholy fills the soul and a pensive doubt respecting the reality of many appearances haunts the mind, when we observe that what, a couple of hours hence, will be the counterfeit presentment of the coated torso of a gentleman of the first fashion, is now a block of sackcloth and leather, roughly dusted with a cane; and eke that the flowing outline of a magnificent woman in an Indian shawl is but a rigid stand of iron wire, like the cage of a Cockatoo in very reduced circumstances.

Who buys all this jewellery? Here, within a stone's throw—within a stone's throw? say rather cheek by jowl—are half-a-dozen jewellers' shops with fortunes displayed in each of their windows. Somebody must have fortunes to buy up these *fortunes*. *Who is it that is not satisfied*

with spending his money on diamonds and pearls, bracelets, rings, and necklaces, but requires a silver porcupine with ruby eyes to hold his toothpicks, or an owl of great price for his wax matches? Facetious pins, bearing devices of the rebus order, or miniature pint pots, splinter-bars, tobacco-pipes, death's heads, dice, must offer attractions to somebody. All these silver cups and flagons are not manufactured solely for the edification of street loungers like ourself. There must be a market somewhere for those suites of diamonds, those glancing emeralds, those strings of mellow, moonlight pearls. Would that we might make them our own! Perhaps, on reflection though, we are better off without them. Perhaps if we had them we should be tortured with fears of losing them, and perhaps they will give less pleasure to their possessors than to us staring at them as they repose publicly in their blue, or white, or maroon velvet boxes.

Consider, with admiration not unmixed with astonishment, this amazing garment at the draper's next door. It is white, and appears to be composed of satin as to the skirt, which is, however, by no means its most important part. It is excessively long and remarkably inconvenient; but with that exception it is scanty. Clouds of gauzy tulle float from it. Bunches and bows (for which there are doubtless technical terms, unknown to us) cover it in all directions. It surely is not a dress *very* admirably adapted to a crowded room. We can see it towards the close of the evening's campaign, a mere skirt, and a hopeless tangled mass of diaphanous ruin. Now, that other dress, also white, but with certain blue adornments, is evidently meant for dancing, and for plenty of it. It is short and sensible. Why, if this be sanctioned by fashion—and we suppose it must be or it would not be here—should ladies inflict on their unfortunate partners yards upon yards of unmanageable trains?

Here, in the bonnet shop, is another peculiarity to be remarked. What can be prettier than the ladies' hat of the present fashion? It is an elegant, sensible, useful head gear, becoming to a pretty face, and not trying to a plain face. Contrast it with what is called a bonnet. An object useless, unmeaning, and inartistic to the last degree. There must be something remarkable in the female mind that induces it to prefer this miserable complication of odds and ends to the simplicity of the hat.

Ha! A pleasant odour! The fashion-

able perfumer's. It looks cool and comfortable. Vast jars of dried roses and violets, great glass vessels of divers-coloured sweet extracts, suggest luxurious repose. We may or may not believe, as we please, that all the flowers that ever grew, or did not grow, are distilled here into perfumes, resembling in all respects the parent odour. To our thinking, with one or two grand exceptions, all perfumes are much alike. Lavender-water, if it be properly prepared, certainly suggests lavender—it is fortunate that Eau de Cologne does not suggest Cologne—but in a scent called new-mown hay, presented to our notice the other day, we could no more find the scent of new-mown hay than of hot roast beef. Nevertheless, a little perfume is pleasant enough, and this is a good window to look upon, for the Sabæan odours that hang about are as grateful to the nostrils as the coloured vessels are to the eye. The hairdresser next door lends his aid to the sweet scenting of the neighbourhood, and his wares, if not very tempting by reason of their beauty, are suggestive.

Does any lady ever look at the arrangement of any other ladies' hair? Does any lady ever look into a hairdresser's shop? If so, how does the hideous chignon, in its present proportions, hold its ground? If any woman's head grew into such monstrous shapes as may now be seen in all directions wherever women are congregated together, it would be a cause of mourning to her family, of consultation among eminent surgeons, and she would probably spend the greater part of her time in judicious seclusion. Here shall be a woman with small delicate features, a small head, and of small stature. Instead of making the most of the natural beauties with which she is gifted, she frizzles, and cuts, and gums her front hair into all sorts of uncouth forms, and surmounts her back hair with an enormous ball of somebody else's tresses! The lady appears to have two heads, one (the artificial) considerably larger than the other. The hat has to be perched on the nose, and a most preposterous result is presented. However, there is one virtue about the chignon. It is honest. There's no deception, gentlemen. Even if the ladies were desirous of trying to lead people to suppose that the porters' knots on their heads are composed of their own hair it would be useless. For the hairdressers, anxious to advertise their wares, have rendered that deception an impossibility. Their shops are full of

chignons. Plain chignons; frizzed chignons; chignons woven into a pattern similar to the large basket work used chiefly for waste paper baskets; chignons with supplementary curls; chignons with straight flimsy tresses pendent from them; chignons of every variety, have long been familiar to the male observer. As we look into our fashionable hairdresser's, moreover, we become aware of long and thick plaits of hair, of arrangements of curls, and of similar devices, braids, and bands, to a most astonishing extent. And these hirsute deceptions are evidently not intended solely for elderly ladies, as were the fronts (hideous devices!) of the bygone generation, but for ladies of all ages. It would seem as if a real female head of hair were not to be found in these times. The "glory of a woman is in her hair" we are told: but nothing is said about the glory being attainable by the use of somebody else's hair. Men have their faults, Heaven knows, but in matters of this sort they show a little more sense than women. It is fashionable to wear a beard, and most men's faces are improved by it; yet false beards, chin-chignons so to speak, have not yet become popular. We are afraid, however, to cry out too loudly against the chignon. Female taste is a greivous thing to meddle with, and it is very possible that a sudden change might be made, and we might find ladies with their hair, whether scanty or abundant, plastered tight down to their heads. So it was with crinoline. In moderation and in its earlier days it was a graceful and convenient fashion. The convenient and graceful period very quickly vanished. The era of iron hoops, of horsehair substances many inches thick, of enormous size and utter unmanageableness, set in. The crinoline became an instrument of torture to wretched men, and must have been most inconvenient and uncomfortable to its wearers. When, at last, the fashion changed, was the sensible part of the dress retained, and the absurd rejected? Not a bit of it. Horrible straight clinging skirts with long trailing trains succeeded, and on the whole it may be said that the tyranny of fashion is worse than it was.

Occasionally in some of the more retired streets in this part of town (Regent-street is not far off from where we stand, and Bond-street is handy) the shop-window amateur comes across mysterious half-blinds in ground-floor windows, severely inscribed with a single name. Pugsblumby, for instance, puts his name in his window

as if under the impression that everybody knows who Pugslumby is, and what his business is. He clearly keeps a shop of some kind, but scorns to intimate the nature of his transactions to the casual public. This is unkind to the genuine shop-window lover. The blind is impervious. It is impossible to make out any of Pugslumby's stock. Pugslumby becomes a terrible subject of uneasy conjecture. Does he sell anything? Is it really a shop? If it be really a shop, is the business so good, the connexion so large and steady, that no fresh customers are required? Or is Pugslumby slow and behind the age? Or does (even this suspicion has dawned upon us) *does* Pugslumby discount paper? Once, and only once, we saw a portion of the stock of one of these establishments, in the likeness of a burnished helmet with trulent brazen ornaments, and a bloodthirsty red plume, revealed for a moment above the blind. A tremendous sword depended from a nail in the shutter. It was a startling and an unexpected sight. Could Pugslumby have lent any hopeful young civilian one thousand pounds, on condition that he took seven hundred and fifty pounds' worth of helmet, red plume, and Castle of Otranto sword?

The photographic shops are always encircled by a crowd of gazers. And, of a truth, there is always plenty to look at there. Does an individual achieve celebrity? He or she is to be seen photographed all over town within a week. Notoriety? Same result. Infamy? Same result. Be a thief on a sufficiently large scale, and you shall have a prefix to your name. As "Mr." Higgs. Men and women of all classes, of all ranks, and of all sorts of characters may be studied from the pavement. If a minister make a success, look out all the old portraits in stock and put them in the window. Take his portrait again if you can induce him to sit for it, and label it "the last;" if you cannot induce him to sit, label anything as the last portrait of him. His rival on the other side of the House is also a good card to play, for it is of little importance to the sale of these wares whether their originals happen to have met with successes or reverses. It is sufficient that they are talked about at the moment. With actors, authors, royal personages, and all other public characters, the rule holds good. Furthermore, it is not even necessary to take the actual photographic portrait of the individual on brisk

sale. Get somebody to draw any sort of portrait of him, and have it photographed. The public will buy it. If it be unlike him, the public will resent his being unlike his photograph; not his photograph's being unlike him. Perhaps the best harvest to be got out of any individual well known to the public, is at the time of his or her decease. This harvest is not of very long duration, but it is very good while it lasts. Take your photograph, and frame it in a deep black border, and advertise it with as much clap-trap as you can compass, and you will sell a very satisfactory number of copies.

The window of a large photographic shop affords a capital means of judging of the tone of the public mind at any given time. From the popular photographs it is easy to discern what sort of books are being read, what sort of plays acted, what sort of frivolity is for the time fashionable. An experienced Londoner, long absent from home, and with but an intermittent supply of newspapers, might say with certainty from an inspection of the *cartes-de-visite* in the shop windows what would be the prominent subjects of conversation at his first dinner party.

When the fine weather sets in, the windows of those shops most set apart for photographs of scenery become terribly suggestive to the unfortunates who know that, by reason of work or impecuniosity, summer jaunts and autumn trips are not for them. There are photographs of all the places you would like to go to; and the more impossible it is for you to go to them, the more delightful are the scenes presented to your longing eye. Quiet English lanes, leafy Devonshire retreats, and fresh reviving sea beach, pleasant to think of in the dusty town. Further afield, lo! the grand Swiss mountains reposing on the glaciers which look (in the photograph) so easy to traverse, and which turn out such very different things when you try them. Dark silent pine-woods, shady and cool; rushing torrents, ice caves, snow fields—all things beautiful, picturesque, and unattainable—are mercilessly presented to the view of the compulsory stay-at-home. Let him take comfort. The same window that shows him these natural wonders, shows him also among the beautiful woods and by the placid waters of old Thames, at Maidenhead or Marlow, Pangbourne or Henley, holiday nooks easily within reach of limited time and limited cash. And if even these be beyond his reach, let him

look his fill and be thankful that he can see their likenesses for nothing as often as he likes.

AUTHENTIC SINGHALESE GENEALOGY.

LET others trace the birth of the Singhalese people in a way that would meet the limited understanding of our own ethnologists. The Singhalese—no doubt, the best authorities upon their own past history—account for themselves thus.

In ancient days there was a great war in Ceylon, known as the Rawena Jooddé, after which the island was overrun by demons for about two thousand years. In his visits to Ceylon, Budha destroyed, or drove away all but a few of these malignant spirits; and foretold the arrival of a warrior, one Vijee Singheba Kumaria, who with the help of seven hundred followers would finish the job. Before entering on his final rest (Nirwána, cessation of existence) Budha gave a thread to Sekkereh Deves Edrya, with instructions that it was to be worn as a neck-tie by Vijee on his landing, and he left also a consignment of holy-water with which Vijee's followers were to be sprinkled.

This Vijee Singheba Kumaria was the son of Sinhebahoo, king of Vagooratteh. Who can doubt a fact so impressive? Sinhebahoo was the son of a father to whom there belongs a tale.

There reigned in Vagooratteh a king who claimed descent from the sun, and this monarch had a daughter who was the most beautiful girl in the kingdom. Vagooratteh was infested by lions. One of them was most furious and kept the people of the country on the qui vive to know who next should be eaten. This lion, whilst prowling one day in the royal pleasure grounds, espied the king's lovely daughter and became enamoured of her. The monarch of the forest seized the damsel, carried her off to his stronghold, and made her his mate. He was, in fact, the father with a tail. The offspring of his marriage with the loveliest of princesses was a son, human in form, but lion-hearted, to whom his mother gave the name of Sinhebahoo. This mother, who never ceased to yearn after the home of her youth, and in whom the affectionate remembrance of her parents was ever fresh, instilled into the mind of her son an abhorrence of his noisy, greedy father, and an ardent desire to escape from the paternal den. In course of time he took his opportunity, fled from the only home he knew, and found refuge in the royal city of Vagooratteh. Now this lion, exasperated by the conduct of his son, became more furious than ever, and so ravaged the country that he was regarded by the people as a tax from which it was the duty of their king to free them. The king not having enough confidence in his own strength to fight the lion personally, and not being able to persuade any of his warriors to have a bout with him, made proclamation

that whoever would destroy the lion should receive the highest honours. Sinhebahoo then went to court, tendered his services, and received the royal mandate to go in and win. He proceeded to the forest, did go in, sought out his lion-father, fought him, beat him, and became a highly meritorious parricide.

Sinhebahoo having abolished his father and released his mother, returned in triumph to the capital. A day of general rejoicing was proclaimed, and Sinhebahoo was summoned to appear before the aged king that high honours might be conferred upon him, as per agreement. The victorious warrior, on being admitted to the royal presence, presented to the king his long-lost daughter; and she declared that the hero was her son. The monarch, filled with gratitude towards the deliverer of his daughter, and faint with admiration at the valour of Sinhebahoo, acknowledged him as his grandson, and made him heir to the throne of Vagooratteh.

Sinhebahoo had a son, whom he named Vijee Singheba Kumaria—Singheba means descended from the lion, for he was the lion's grandson.

About two thousand four hundred and ten years ago,* Vijee, who inherited the lion-heart of his father, conceived the idea of taking the beautiful Lankádipa (Ceylon) from the demons who held it, and of founding a new kingdom for himself. He accordingly gathered together a band of seven hundred giants, and at their head invaded the island. On landing he and his followers were met by a she-devil, named Cowénee Jackinee, beautiful in form and bewitching in manners; she fell in love with Vijee, and wishing to preserve him from the rest of the demons, led him and his companions into a lonely part of the island, where they might live unmolested. They had many adventures in eluding the search of the other devils, many flirtations together, and much love-making, at least on the part of Cowénee. The adventurous Vijee being thus thwarted in his project of making himself master of the country, soon yielded to Cowénee's request that he would marry her; she promising that as soon as she should become his wife, she would give him power over all the other bad ones. As soon as the marriage rites were concluded Cowénee produced the holy-water, which Budha had given to Sekkereh Deves Edrya, and with it she sprinkled Vijee and his companions in arms. By the efficacy of this holy sprinkling and guided by Cowénee, Vijee and his little army soon fell in with the devils and destroyed them all but one, that one being Cowénee herself.

Cowénee, who had a vixenish temper and strong passions, ruled her husband with a rod of iron; and as he was impetuous, and kicked under her rod, domestic tiffs were frequent. But as soon as he submitted, her old flame rekindled and she was as kind as ever. One day, after one of these quarrels and reconciliations, whilst they were billing and cooing together, Cowénee un-

* It is noteworthy that the period of Vijee's arrival in Ceylon corresponds with the commencement of the Buddhist era, which dates five hundred and forty-three years before the Christian era.

tied a thread which she always wore on her arm, and playfully knotted it round Vijee's neck; on the instant she began to tremble and feel faint, whilst he felt increasing vigour. For this was the thread neck-tie which Budha had given to Sekkerah Devee Edrya, and it conferred on Vijee the power of completing the extermination of the devils. By the power of this thread Vijee transformed his she-devil wife into a rock, and became sole master of Lankádipa. He declared himself king, under the title of Vijee Singheba Rajia, which means King Vijee, descendant of a lion; and his followers assumed the name or designation of Singhale, followers of the lion, in honour of their leader.

Shortly after this Vijee entered the married state again; but this time he espoused a royal princess of the kingdom of Pandoowas Ratteh, on the Coromandel coast. On her arrival in Ceylon this princess was attended by seven hundred damsels, who became the wives of Vijee's army of seven hundred giants; and from these gentlemen and ladies the whole Singhalese race is descended.

TOM BUTLER.

A BOY'S HERO. IN SIX CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER II. THE FIGHT.

BESIDES our English juvenile colony, there was another class who frequented the common to pursue their pastimes. These were the usual type of blue-frocked, pale-faced French lads, who made an immense deal of noise and chattered as they pursued their rather feminine amusements. The feeling between the nations was anything but cordial, and we deeply resented their coming on the same ground with us at all. This was a little unreasonable, as their title to their own soil might—on the construction of the law of nations—be considered higher than ours. We noticed that they kissed each other when they met—a proceeding received with shouts of derisive laughter from our side. If one of them was touched by the stroke of a ball, or fell down and scraped himself, or if, as Tom put it, "you held up your little finger," he forthwith began to cry. Tom himself protested, and there was no reason to doubt him, that when on one occasion he had slapped the face of one who had been impertinent, the creature had spat—yes, spat, and jabbered at him like a monkey. Indeed, Tom's contempt for them knew no bounds. He despised the French, he said; "We licked them at Waterloo, and if they have the courage, sir, to give us the chance again, we'll lick 'em once more."

Once, M. Bernard was coming along across the common, reading, and passed by

just as Tom was in the middle of some such declaration, "I hate the French!" M. Bernard stopped and accosted me, making me colour, for I knew there was a loss of caste in thus having a "French fellow" over me.

"Well, my little friend," he said, "I will expect you by-and-by. Good morning, Mr. Bootlair!"

"Oh, good morning," said Tom, carelessly.

"So you dislike the French?"

"Well, since you put the question to me," said Tom, promptly, "I really do."

"And yet, is not that unreasonable?" said the teacher, gravely. "Your father, I know, does not. Do they not give you shelter and asylum——"

"Which we pay for," said Tom, scornfully. "Much obliged to 'em."

"Which you pay for," repeated M. Bernard, with his eyes fixed on him—"which you pay for, *as you say*." There was a delicate sarcasm in his tone quite unintelligible to us. "Your father finds every one here good-natured, indulgent, patient. He does not complain of *them*; I will expect you, my young friend, in five minutes."

Tom did not answer till he had gone, and then did so with infinite heat and impetuosity.

"A mean, glib, beggarly pedagogue! What right has he to speak to me at all? Who wants anything of *him*? I'd thrash him and fifty like him one after the other!"

This was Tom's invariable test of merit; any one that *he* could thrash, or proclaimed he would thrash, being a poor, mean, unworthy impostor. I merely mention this incident to show that the tone of the public mind was not by any means a healthy one. On our side, we had really come to believe that we did do these "beggarly" Frenchmen—and observe the exquisite propriety of this word "beggarly" as coming from *some* of our community, whom it certainly fitted far more appropriately—a great honour by dwelling in their *un-English* land, and by putting up with their eccentric and, to us, unsuitable ways and habits. This was Tom Butler's favourite theme. To use his own phrase, "he never let a point go;" and even as he passed a French youth, his head in the air, his long arms swinging, his fair face thrown back, there was this contemptuous air of challenge, and a smile of amusement, as it were, at something exquisitely ludicrous in the very *existence*—apart from dress and bearing—of a French boy.

"God bless us!" he would say, addressing us oratorically, his back against the white wooden rail which ran round the common. "What are they like at all? Half babies, half girls? Girls! Why, one of our dear English girls at home would have more spirit in her little finger than all this canaille put together. *She* wouldn't exactly cry if you held up your little finger!"

On what Tom founded this favourite image of his, where he had so held up his little finger, and who had cried at that exhibition, we were never told. But we firmly believed that some such incident had taken place.

Now a word or two about the "rabble." Stretching to the back of our villas was a level country or table-land a good deal covered with orchards, and behind the orchards a very slender village, a dozen cottages or so. The inhabitants, of course, depended on the sale or manufacture of what Tom contemptuously styled "their eternal apples," either in the shape of cider or, as the same authority explained to us, that "filthy mess of squash" we saw in open tubs at shop doors under the nets full of peg-tops. The boys who were our enemies were the boys of this little community. One or two of their sires were Huguenots, and I recal our Mr. John standing in easy conversation with a grim covenant-er-looking figure who was at the door of his cottage. Mr. John seemed to look on it as a sort of *lusus*, and often told the anecdote. It was a Sunday. He was lying against the door, *resting* himself, with the pipe in his mouth. "Vous ally Legleeze," says I. "No, no," says he, taking the pipe out; "moa Protestong." "Well, well," says I, "after that—" "Wee wee," says he, "moa Protestong!"

The boys of this district cherished the same feelings to us that we did to them. Of a Sunday was our opportunity, when their parents were away at the church, or some little fair, or junketting. Then we would repair, a small band of irregulars, cautiously and secretly, one by one, some of us creeping along on our stomachs in imitation of what we had heard was real "skirmishing practice." Then the fun began, and nothing more exciting could be conceived—the shooting, the hitting, the "cutting out," even the roar of agony—as a hard apple, launched from Tom's unerring hand, landed on a French cheek-bone, and was cloven into fragments. So the exciting sport went on, we of course

having the best of it, and gradually driving the enemy out of cover and out of reach of ammunition. As we advanced, pouring in our shot like hail, they were pressed back into the cover, and fairly fled, while we showed ourselves and shouted. We had at least two such victories, but on the third occasion something occurred which led to a change of fortune.

There was a cooper who made casks for the apples, and this cooper had a tall son, a head, at least, over Tom, and whose name was Leah. From this circumstance, I suspect, he was connected with the old "moa Protestong" of our Mr. John, or was perhaps the actual son of the grim Huguenot. This I never learned. This Leah, the son, had only returned home on the preceding Saturday, and was new to the parish. During the heat of the conflict a young recruit had been struck down by a large baking apple. He ran crying into a house, whence he emerged in a few moments with Leah. We were a little surprised at this reinforcement—his size, apparent strength, indifference. In a moment he was at work, sending his missiles with a short, quick, and steady fire, that upset all our calculations. He advanced, too, instead of keeping under shelter. It must be owned that we were thrown into confusion, but it was all from the surprise. Some said *it was a man*. At the same time the fathers of the village—with the old Huguenot himself—began to make their appearance. It was time to retire. As one of us remarked, "We had done all we had wanted." As we drew off, Leah made a low gesture of contempt and defiance, such as an Indian would do in derision of his foes. He then walked into his hut, to renew the sleep which I suppose we had interrupted.

Tom was quite excited about this. "That's *my* man," he said. "Wait for another Sunday, my buttercups, and you shall see." That other Sunday came, but Leah did not appear. Meanwhile another event took place, which contributed a good deal to the catastrophe.

Down below in the town there was to be a little festival, or gala, associated with I know not what, but among other pastimes it was determined there should be A REGATTA. Les yachtsmen were all invited, and did not come, but some English sailors from the Southampton steamer had entered for the rowing races. International courtesies, or contests, were then not at all in fashion; there was no *entente cordiale*, or steady jog-trot alliance which now exists. The

thing was quite a novelty, and caused a sensation. Frenchmen's eyes flashed fire as they talked of it, but they were uneasy. There would be something unfair they were certain. No one laughed so loud as Tom. "They row!" he said, "the poor weak fools! why, one of our tars would beat them with his left hand tied behind his back!"

Without going so far as this, there was a certain impression in the colony on the hill that victory would be with our countrymen; and on the morning of the struggle the Côte was crowded with people having old glasses and telescopes, and all eagerly looking down to the blue sea below Honfleur. The blouses gathered behind, gesticulating and chattering, their eyes darting fire and hostility at the English. Tom was in a real excitement, his father's old spyglass under his arm, and striding about as if he were captain of a ship.

The race was duly rowed. We could see the four boats—four faint dots—far below on the blue sea, a Paris dot, a Rouen one, a Havre dot, and an English one—the glorious scarlet!

"Six as fine of our tars, sir," said Tom, the glass to his eye, "with their iron muscles, as ever you saw!"

Three minutes did the work. One boat gradually drawing yards, then furlongs, ahead. At the end of the boat was a little faint patch of red. Tom actually threw his spyglass into the air.

"Old England for ever, boys! Give 'em a British cheer, lads! I *knew* we'd lick 'em!"

And we all raised a shout, and from the windows of the English villas, where the ladies were, fluttered white pocket-handkerchiefs. The looks of the Frenchmen were black as night.

Mr. John, who rarely missed anything "sporting," had gone down into the town to see the race as a gentlemanly spectator. Of course he got into the best place on board an English steamer, having made an intimate acquaintance with the steward. He brought back strange stories of the excitement.

"Well, well, well! modyee! modyee!" (A shape in his dialect for "Mon Dieu!") "Oh the creatures! It was skyandalous how they were treated; the hustlin', and then the beatin' and then the crowd—forty-five thousand people, no less, round the creatures. Oh, it was shocking! A regular E-mute!"

This we did not understand for a long time,

for it was a new word, and he was pleased with it, and repeated it with great satisfaction, "th' mute." More careful consideration helped us to his meaning; yet it was too gentle a name, for Tom Butler had the whole particulars, which he related to us in boxing language. The cowardly French had made a brutal attack on our brave tars, and had beaten them—a great mob. The "brave tars" had put their backs against a wall, and had thrashed and smashed right and left, knocking over the cowardly sneaks, and pounding and maiming them on good old English principles.

"But they were too many for them," went on Tom, in a glowing indignation. "An Englishman is a match for half a dozen Frenchmen easy; but not for a thousand. And only fancy the scoundrels—they draw their penknives and get behind the brave fellows, and stab them in the back. That's manly—that's brave! Ain't it?"

Tom made many harangues that day to various audiences, and within hearing, whenever he could manage it, of various natives of the country—a French gentleman or two, who only smiled and passed on. Once the great Leah went by, fiercely gesticulating, stooping down to his friend, and describing with infinite animation. He had been down to see the contest, and was clearly enjoying the retribution that had overtaken the vile English. Tom raised his voice, threw more scorn in, and said very proudly, and with insufferable offensiveness, "We shall have to give 'em WATERLOO over again!"

It was like galvanism. The two French youths twitched and started, their eyes became bloodshot; they turned back, and Tom, scenting battle, repeated his phrase, with the talismanic word. Leah came striding up, his eyes bloodshot, his arms going, his blouse actually trembling. There was, indeed, something going to happen, and we all held our breath. Tom waited for him, his lips curling, his breath getting a little short, his fingers unconsciously clenched into appropriate fighting shape. The two Frenchmen came on, and at once poured out a volley of ferocious vituperation utterly unintelligible, Leah swaying his arms, putting his chest close to Tom's, and his mouth close to Tom's—"Anything like his rank garlic breath you never!" said Tom—and chattering all the time; his head over Tom's, who remained quite calm, never stirred or retreated an inch. "But I was ready for him all the time, and at the first motion would have had my fist

smash on his face." At that moment one of the gendarmes, whom I have never seen since those days, save in Robert Macaire, where I feel kindly to them, like old friends of childhood, came lounging leisurely down. He was the one peace officer of the district, and was really as resplendent as white and yellow braid could make him. This official had reasons for being specially wary on this occasion, and came down to us, on which the crowd dispersed, and Mr. Leah "drew off," talking very loud, and banging down his arm, and addressing an imaginary audience.

"I thought he meant nothing," said Tom, "all wind and froth; just like 'em all round. He's double my weight," added Tom, addressing a *real* audience in his impetuosity, "and a head over me; but I am to be found anywhere, at any time. And that Jack-in-the-box,"—so he contemptuously alluded to the gendarme—"can tell him *he* knows me." Wonderful creature, Tom; so much at home in the world, brave, gallant, insolent perhaps, but certainly wonderful. "I tell you what," went on Tom, hastily, "we'll do something to take down the conceit of these frog-eaters. Let us show them what we are made of, and that we are not ashamed of our country. We'll have a procession, boys, and hoist the British flag, in honour of the day."

At the time we thought this was merely fine and figurative language, like the "nailing to the mast," which so often followed—an operation even then familiar to us. A British flag could not be had nearer than the Southampton packet. But we did not know what Tom, as he himself assured us, could do "when he was excited." We were delighted at *something* coming, something to look forward to, and waited anxiously for the hour appointed.

It was one of the fine summer evenings—cheap here from their very plenty—soft and fragrant, with the light lasting till past ten o'clock, and no cloudy night. At nine the common re-echoed with the cheerful notes of talk and laughter; and along the roadside down to the right, where the high road joined, and the trees set in and made an avenue, and the lamps hung across from a string, various of the natives sauntered by, talking over the day. There was a pleasant lull abroad. Suddenly Tom appeared among us, emerging from the prison-like gate hurriedly.

"Another row with the governor," he said, "but I wouldn't fail. Here we are," and to our wondering eyes produced what

seemed a little counterfeited union-jack! "I got Victorine to make it, and gave her instructions myself. Bless you! I know the colours by heart. Now, boys, fall in, I say."

Clearly some great "fun" was coming, and we did as we were bid, and fell in. We started in a sort of procession, marshalled by Tom. He walked at the head. A few loungers stopped to look, and wondered, I suppose. But when the glorious "jack" was unfurled, carried by Tom in person, they understood perfectly. "There!" he said, "there could be no mistake." At fixed points we were ordered to halt and cheer, which we did with a will. A few squibs, purchased at a sou a piece for the occasion, gave quite the air of a *feu-de-joie*. Naturally this excited attention. Suddenly a little English lad calls out,

"But I say, Tom, the orchard follows are coming!" And looking in that direction we saw about a dozen of the blouses running out from the apple-trees.

"Halt!" cried Tom. "Steady, lads!"

We drew up in a line. We assumed by instinct that their errand must be hostile. Were they not our natural enemies? And as they came on, another called out, "And Tom, I say, there's that Leah!"

Tom looked out curiously, shading his eyes, and said, "I knew when they saw the Jack——" He was not at all familiar with the sacred volume, or he would have said that the Lord had delivered the Frenchman into his hands. As it was, I recollect some expression answering to the sentiment came into his face.

The "fellows" came on, gesticulating and chattering, Tom at once stepping in front and waving his flag to them in cheerful encouragement. It really had the effect of scarlet on a bull, and Leah,—foaming at the mouth like such a steer, sputtering awful consonants, in which the sound of "s'cray!" and "tz!" were conspicuous—strode up close, and made a grasp at our ensign.

Tom spoke French well, put his hand on Mr. Leah's chest, and said sharply, "Stand back! *Que voulez-vous!*"

The answer was unintelligible. But in a moment we heard him speaking very fast and fiercely, and Tom answered very lightly and slowly:

"With all my heart! Make a ring, boys. I am going to thrash this fellow."

In a moment the ring was made, the blues on one side, the blacks on the other; the "gentlemen" one way, the plebeians the other. Tom would not take off his

coat, though invited to do so. He merely buttoned it tight. The Frenchman threw off his blouse, and appeared in his waistcoat. He had a broad chest, a strong arm, and the usual tendency of most young Frenchmen to fulness below. Tom's was a narrow, wiry chest, slight arms, a slighter throat, and a pale, delicate face. He was a little overgrown, and surveyed his opponent smiling.

Many years later, seeing a piece called the Floating Beacon, in which a combat takes place on the deck of a vessel between the atrocious captain of the craft and a guileless passenger—the way in which the abandoned captain prepared himself for the combat, his starts, his drawing back, his advance on one leg, his gaunt spasms of preparations—all suggested something familiar. It soon took the shape of Mr. Leah, who tried his wrists, had them tried by others, whispered his friends, and was whispered by them. We did not know till later that Mr. Leah was a man of reputation in le boxe. Tom remained quite quiet, smiling, while these preparations were being made.

I never shall forget the way that Frenchman came on. It struck us with something as like horror as with astonishment. For, advancing as if on the ordinary system, he suddenly dropped his head, and, with his bullet-like os frontis, drove straight at Tom's middle. The shock was tremendous, and it sent the blood up into Tom's pale face. Then the struggle began. The savage, strong arms were wound tightly round Tom's slender limbs, Leah striving to heave him off his legs, and go with him to the ground, where, *as we all knew*, he would bite, and kick, and stamp at his fallen foe—all fair in the French mode of fighting. Such, at least, was our belief. But Tom, though taken by surprise, contrived a clever trip—he was from Cumberland—and, while the native was thus unsupported, gave him a desperate heave over to one side, and shook himself free. The savage looked wildly and thirsting for blood, as we thought, and a little scared.

"Now, boys, see how I'll match him this time and his wild Indian tricks!"

Tom waited, still with the old contemptuous smile, something out of breath, something flushed, but with his woman-like fists in a new and suspicious attitude; the other, very red, and breathing hard

from his incipient corpulence, was crouched down like a tiger about to spring. He came on as he had done before; but Tom received the bullet-head in the part he had received it before, and having got it there, we saw with delight the splendid reception it met with. He had the round coarse head, and a shower of blows rained on it—rained on the ear, on the cheekbones—four times. The delicate fists, worked as if by steam-power—the Frenchman had unwittingly placed his own head "in Chancery," a distinction other pugilists are most anxious to avoid. We roared and cheered with delight as the combatants went round and round, Tom's fists going up and down like a piston, smashing, pounding, battering, until at last the wretched Frenchman had to abandon his strategy, and raise a blazing, flaming, mauled face, all stripes and welts, from the place into which it had been thrust. Then Tom saw his opportunity, and following the great Duke's tactics towards the close of the ever glorious day at Waterloo, rushed at the face which was lifted and came on him with a crushing "left-hander." It was "Up, Guards, and at 'em!" now. Then he came on with the right, and Leah staggered and reeled back. The combat was virtually over. The great Leah was defeated, and defeated for ever!

That splendid victory of the British arms was long remembered. The French power was utterly humiliated. They never rallied. We might turn into their orchards for challenge or even plunder, but they never showed. Alas! the hero of that glorious day had but a short time to enjoy his glory. One morning some strange men were seen at the captain's gate, striving, it would seem, to get in, and rattling it savagely. Some of the English experienced in such matters said, "Bailiffs, of course!" It was not, of course; it was the landlord of the premises. The one-armed captain had gone in the night with his family. The English steamer sailed at midnight. The French were "done," as they have been done so often since.

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

WRECKED IN PORT.

A SERIAL STORY BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP."

BOOK III.

CHAPTER VI. AN INCOMPLETE VICTORY.

MR. BENTHALL'S neat cob was not standing in a loose box in the Woolgreaves stable, as was its usual wont when its master had paid a visit to that hospitable mansion. On this occasion the school-master had walked over from Helmingham, and, though by nature an indolent man, Mr. Benthall was exceedingly pleased at the prospect of the walk before him on emerging from Woolgreaves after his interview in the library with Mrs. Creswell. He felt that he required a vent for the excitement under which he was labouring, a vent which could only be found in sharp and prolonged exercise. The truth was that he was very much excited and very angry indeed. "It is a very charitable way of looking at it—a more than charitable way," he muttered to himself as he strode over the ground, "to fancy that Mrs. Creswell was ignorant of what she was doing! did not know that she was offering me a bribe to vote for her husband, and to influence the farmers on this estate to do the same! She knew it fast enough; she is by far too clever a woman not to understand all about it! And if she would try that game on with us, who hold a comparatively superior position, what won't she do with those lower on the electoral roll? Clever woman, too, thorough woman of the world! I wonder at her forgetting herself and showing her hand so completely. How admirably she emphasised the 'any of the inmates,' in that sentence when she gave me my congé! It was really remarkably well done! When I tell Gertrude this, it will show her the

real facts at once. She has had a firm impression that, up to the present time, 'madam,' as she calls Mrs. Creswell, has had no idea as to the state of the case between us; but I don't think even incredulous Gertrude would have much doubt of it if she had been present, and caught the expression of Mrs. Creswell's face as she forbade my communication with 'any' of the inmates of her house. Neither look nor tone admitted of the smallest ambiguity, and I took care to appreciate both. Something must be done to circumvent our young friend the hostess of Woolgreaves."

Thus soliloquised the Reverend George Benthall, as he strode across the bleak barren fields, chopping away with his stick at the thin, naked hedges as he passed them, pushing his hat back from his brow, and uttering many sounds which were at least impatient, not to say unclerical, as he progressed. After his dinner, feeling that this was an exceptional kind of evening, and one which must be exceptionally treated, he went down to his cellar, brought therefrom a bottle of excellent Burgundy, lit up his favourite pipe, placed his feet on the fender, and prepared himself for a careful review of the occurrences of the day. On the whole, he was satisfied. It may seem strange that a man, indolent, uncaring about most things, and certainly desirous of the opportunity for the acquisition of worldly goods, should have refused the chance of such a position as Marian hinted he might aspire to—a position which her own keen natural instinct and worldly knowledge suggested to her as the very one which he would most covet—but it must be remembered that Mr. Benthall was a man of birth and family, bound to endorse the family politics in his own person, and likely to shrink from the merest suggestion

of a bribe as the highest insult and indignity that could possibly be offered him. One of Marian's hints went home; when she told him that all acquaintance between him and any member of the Woolgreaves household must cease, the bolt penetrated. The easy attention which Mr. Benthall had just paid to the rather odd, but decidedly amusing, niece of rich Squire Creswell had developed into a great liking, which had grown into a passion deeper and stronger than this calm, placid—well, not to disguise the fact, selfish—clergyman had ever imagined he could have experienced; and although, in his homeward walk, he was pleased to smile in his complimentary fashion at Mrs. Creswell's skill in aiming the arrow, when he turned the whole matter over in his mind after dinner, he was compelled to allow that it was exceedingly unpleasant, and that he did not see how affairs between himself and Gertrude were to be carried out to a happy issue without bringing matters to a crisis. For this crisis long-headed and calculating Mr. Benthall had been for some time prepared—that is to say, he had long entertained the idea that, after a time, Mrs. Creswell, getting tired of the alternations in the state of armed neutrality or actual warfare, in one or other of which she always lived with the young ladies, and feeling towards them as Haman felt towards Mordecai, with the aggravation of their all being women, would certainly do her best towards getting them removed from Woolgreaves; and doing her best meant, when Mr. Creswell was the person to be acted upon, the accomplishment of her designs. But Mr. Benthall felt tolerably certain, from his knowledge of Mr. Creswell, and the conversation in some degree bearing on the subject which they had had together, that though the old gentleman would not be able to withstand, nor indeed would for a moment attempt to fight against the pressure which would be put upon him by his wife for the accomplishment of her purpose, even though that preference were to the disadvantage of his blood relations, that result once achieved, he would do everything in his power to ensure the girls' future comfort, and would not abate one jot of the liberal pecuniary allowance which he had always intended for them on the occasion of their marriage. It was very comforting to Mr. Benthall, after due deliberation to come to this conclusion; for though he was very much attached to Gertrude Creswell, and though of late he had begun to think

she was so indispensable to his future happiness that he could almost have married her without any dowry, yet it was pleasant to think that—well, that she would not only make him a charming wife, but bring a very handsome increase to his income—when the storm arrived.

The storm arrived sooner than Mr. Benthall anticipated; it must have been brewing while he was seated with his feet on the fender, enjoying that special bottle of Burgundy and that favourite pipe. As he sat at his breakfast he received a note from Gertrude, which said, "There has been the most terrible fuss here this evening! I don't know what you and madam can have fought about during that dreadfully solemn interview in the library to which she invited you, *but she is furious against you!*" She and uncle were closeted together for nearly an hour after he came in from Brocksopp, and when they joined us in the dining-room, his eyes were quite red and I'm sure he had been crying. Poor old darling! isn't it a shame for that—never mind! After dinner, just as we were about to run off as usual, madam said she wanted to speak to us, and marched us off to the drawing-room. When we got there she harangued us, and told us it was only right we should know that you had behaved in a most treacherous and unfriendly manner towards uncle, and that your conduct had been so base that she had been compelled to forbid you the house. I was going to speak at this, but Maud dashed in, and said she did not believe a word of it, and that it was all madam's concoction, and that you were a gentleman, and I don't know what—you understand, all sorts of nice things about you! And then madam said you had thrown over uncle, to whom you owed such a debt of gratitude—what for, goodness knows!—and were going to vote for uncle's opponent, Mr. Joyce, who— But then I dashed in, and I said that, considering what people said about her and Mr. Joyce, and the engagement that had existed between them, she ought not to say anything against him. And Maud tried to stop me; but my blood was up, and I would go on; and I said all kinds of things, and madam grew very pale, and said that, though she was disposed to make every allowance for me, considering the infatuation I was labouring under—that's what she said, infatuation I was labouring under—she could not put up with being insulted in her own house, and she should appeal to uncle. So she

went away, and presently she and uncle came back together, and he said he was deeply grieved and all that—poor old dear, he looked awful—but he could not have his wife treated with disrespect—disrespect, indeed!—and he thought that the best thing that could be done would be for us to go away, for a time, at least—only for a time, the dear old man said, trying to look cheerful—for if he succeeded in this election he and Mrs. Creswell would necessarily be for several months in London, during which we could come back to Woolgreaves; but for a time, and if we would only settle where we would go, Parker, our maid, who is a most staid and respectable person, would go with us, and all could be arranged. I think Maud was going to fly out again, but a look at the dear old man's woe-begone face stopped her, and she was silent. So it's decided we're to go somewhere out of this. But is it not an awful nuisance, George? What shall we do? Where shall we go? It will be a relief to get rid of madam for a time, and out of the reach of her eyes and her tongue; but doesn't it seem very horrible altogether?"

"Horrible altogether! It does, indeed, seem very horrible altogether," said Mr. Benthall to himself, as he finished reading this epistle, and laid it down on the breakfast-table before him. "What on earth is to be done? This old man seems perfectly besotted, while this very strong-minded young woman, his wife, has completely gleaned the brains out of his head and the kindness out of his heart. What can he be thinking about to imagine that these two girls are to take some lodging and form some course for themselves? Why the thing is monstrous and impossible! They would have to live in seclusion; it would be impossible for any man ever to call upon them, and—oh, it won't do at all, won't do at all! But what's to be done? I can't interfere in the matter, and I know no one with whom I could consult. Yes, by George! Joyce, our candidate, Mr. Joyce; he's a clear-headed fellow, and one who, I should think, if Mrs. Covey's story be correct, would not object to put a spoke in Mrs. Creswell's wheel. I'll go and see him. Perhaps he can help me in this fix."

No sooner said than done. The young gentlemen on the foundation and the head master's boarders had that morning to make shift with the teaching of the ushers, while the neat cob was taken from his stable at an unwonted hour, and cantered down to Brocksopp. Mr. Joyce was not at his

head-quarters, he was out canvassing; so the cob was put up, and Mr. Benthall started on a search-expedition through the town. After some little time he came up with the Liberal candidate, with whom he had already struck up a pleasant acquaintance, and begged a few minutes of his time. The request was granted; they adjourned to Joyce's private sitting-room at the inn, and there Mr. Benthall laid the whole story before him, showing in detail Marian's machinations against the girls, and pointing out the final piece of strategy, by which she had induced her husband to give them the route, and tell them they could no longer be inmates of his house. Joyce was very much astonished, for although the film had gradually been withdrawn from his eyes since the day of the receipt of Marian's letter, he had no idea of the depth of her degradation. That she could endeavour to win him from the tournament now he stood a good chance of victory; that she would even endeavour to bribe a man like Benthall, who was sufficiently venal, Walter thought, who had his price, like most men, but who had not been properly "got at," he could understand; but that she could endeavour to attempt to wreak her vengeance on two unoffending girls, simply because they were remotely connected with one of the causes of her annoyance, was beyond his comprehension. He saw, however, at once, that the young ladies were delicately situated, and, partly from an innate feeling of gallantry, partly with a desire to oblige Benthall, who had proved himself very loyal in the cause, and not without a desire to thwart what was evidently a pet scheme with Mrs. Creswell, he took up the question with alacrity.

"You're quite right," he said, after a little consideration, "in saying that it would be impossible that these two young ladies could go away and live by themselves, or rather with their maid. I know nothing of them, beyond seeing them a long time ago. I should not even recognise them were we to meet now; but it is evident that by birth and education they are ladies, and they must not be thrown on the world, to rough it in the manner proposed by their weak uncle, at the instigation of his charming wife! The question is, what is to be done with them? Neither you nor I, even if we had the power and will, dare offer them any hospitality, miserable bachelors as we are! The laws of etiquette forbid that, and we should

have Mrs. Grundy, egged on by Mrs. Creswell, calling us over the coals and bringing us to book very speedily. It is clear that in their position the best thing for them would be to be received by some lady relative of their own, or in default of that, by some one whose name and character would be a complete answer to anything which our friends Mrs. Grundy, or Mrs. Creswell, might choose to say about them. Have they no such female relations? No! I fear then that, for their own sakes, the best thing we can do is not to interfere in the matter. It is very hard for you, I can see clearly, as you will be undoubtedly deterred from paying any visits to Miss Gertrude until——

Stay, I've an idea: it's come upon me so suddenly that it has almost taken my breath away, and I don't know whether I dare attempt to carry it out. Wait, and let me think it over."

The idea that had occurred to Joyce was, to lay the state of affairs before Lady Caroline Mansergh, and ask her advice and assistance in the matter. He felt certain that she would act with promptitude, and at the same time with great discretion. Her knowledge of the world would tell her exactly what was best to be done under the circumstances, while the high position which she held in society, and that not alone by reason of her rank, would effectually silence any malicious whisperings and critical comments which would inevitably be made on the proceedings of a less favoured personage. The question was, dare he ask her to interfere in the matter? He had no claim on her, he knew; but she had always shown him such great favour, that he thought he might urge his request without offence. Even in the last letter which he had received from her, just before he started on his election campaign, she reminded him of his promise to allow her to be of service to him in any possible way, and never to permit any idea of the magnitude or difficulty of the task to be undertaken to influence him against asking her to do it. Yes, he felt sure that Lady Caroline would be of material assistance to him in his emergency; the only question was, was he not wasting his resources? These young ladies were nothing to him; to him it was a matter of no moment whether they remained at Woolgreaves, or were hunted out to genteel lodgings. Stay, though! To get rid of them from their uncle's house, to remove them from her presence, in which they were constantly reminding her of bygone times, had, accord-

ing to Mr. Benthall's story, been Marian Creswell's fixed intention from the moment of her marriage. Were they to leave now, outcast and humbled, she would have gained a perfect victory; whereas if they were received under the chaperonage of a person in the position of Lady Caroline Mansergh, it would be anything but a degradation of station for the young ladies, and a decided blow for Mrs. Creswell. That thought decided him; he would invoke Lady Caroline's aid at once.

"Well," said he, after a few minutes' pause, when he had come to this determination, "you have waited, and I have thought it over——"

"And the result is——?" asked Mr. Benthall.

"That I shall be bold, and act upon the idea which just occurred to me, and which is briefly this: There is in London a lady of rank and social position, who is good enough to be my friend, and who, I feel certain, will, if I ask her to do so, interest herself in the fortunes of these two young ladies, and advise us what is best to be done for them under present circumstances. It is plain that after what has occurred they can stay no longer at Woolgreaves."

"Perfectly plain. Maud would not listen to such a thing for a moment, and Gertrude always thinks with her sister."

"That's plucky in Miss Maud, and pluck is not a bad quality to be possessed of when you are thrown out into the world on your own resources, as some of us know from experience. Then they must leave as soon as possible. Lady Caroline Mansergh, the lady of whom I have just spoken, will doubtless be able to suggest some place where they can be received, and where they would have the advantage of her occasional surveillance."

"Nothing could possibly be better," cried Mr. Benthall, in great glee. "I cannot tell you, Mr. Joyce, how much I am obliged to you for your disinterested co-operation in this matter."

"Perhaps my co-operation is not so disinterested as you imagine," said Joyce, with a grave smile. "Perhaps—but that's nothing now."

"Will you write to Lady Caroline Mansergh at once? Time presses, you know."

"Better than that, I will go up to London and see her. There will necessarily be a lull in the canvassing here for the next two or three days, and I shall be able to explain far more clearly than by letter. Besides I shall take the opportunity of

seeing our friends Potter and Fyfe, and hearing the best news from head-quarters."

"That is merely an excuse," said Mr. Benthall; "I am sure you are undertaking this journey, solely with the view of serving these young ladies and me."

"And myself, my good friend," replied Joyce; "and myself, I assure you."

Lady Caroline Mansergh had a very charming little house in Chesterfield-street, Mayfair, thoroughly homely and remarkably comfortable. Since she had been left a widow she had frequently passed the winter, as well as the season, in London, and her residence was accordingly arranged with a due regard to the miseries of our delightful climate. Her ladyship was in town, Joyce was glad to find, and after he had sent up his name, he was shown into a very cosy drawing-room, with a large fire blazing on the hearth, and all the draughts carefully excluded by means of portières and thick hanging curtains. He had merely time to notice that the room was eminently one to be lived in, and not kept merely for show, one that was lived in, moreover, as the sign of a woman's hand, everywhere recognisable, in the management of the flowers and the books, in the work-basket and the feminine writing arrangements, so different, somehow, from a man's desk and its appurtenances, plainly showed, when the door opened, and Lady Caroline entered the room.

She was looking splendidly handsome. In all the work and worry of his recent life, Joyce had lost all except a kind of general remembrance of her face and figure, and he was almost betrayed into an exclamation of astonishment as he saw her advancing towards him. There must have been something of this feeling in the expression of his face, for Lady Caroline's cheeks blushed for an instant, and the voice in which she bade him welcome, and expressed her pleasure of seeing him, was rather unsteady in its tone.

"I imagined you were at Brocksopp," she said, after a minute; "indeed I have some idea that quite recently I saw a report in the paper of some speech of yours, as having been delivered there."

"Perfectly correct: I only came up last night."

"And how goes the great cause? No, seriously, how are you progressing; what are the chances of success? You know how interested I am about it!"

"We are progressing admirably, and if

we can only hold out as we are doing, there is very little doubt of our triumph!"

"And you will enter upon the career which I suggested to you, Mr. Joyce, and you will work in it as you have worked in everything else which you have undertaken, with zeal, energy, and success!" said Lady Caroline, with flashing eyes. "But what has brought you to London at this particular time?"

"You, Lady Caroline!"

"I?" and the flush again overspread her face.

"You! I wanted your advice and assistance!"

"Ah! I recollect you said just now, 'if we could only hold out as we are doing.' How foolish of me not at once to—Mr. Joyce, you—you want money to pursue this election, and you have shown your friendship for me by—"

"No, indeed, Lady Caroline, though there is no one in the world to whom I would so gladly be under an obligation. No! this is a matter of a very different kind!" and he briefly explained to her the state of affairs at Woolgreaves, and the position of Maud and Gertrude Creswell.

After he had concluded there was a momentary pause, and then Lady Caroline said, "And you do not know either of these young ladies, Mr. Joyce?"

"I do not! I have scarcely seen them since they were children."

"And it is for the sake of revenge on her that he is taking all this trouble!" thought Lady Caroline to herself; "that woman threw away a priceless treasure; the man who can hate like this must have a great capacity for loving." Then she said aloud, "I am very glad you came to me, Mr. Joyce, as this is plainly a case where prompt action is needed. When do you return to Brocksopp?"

"To-night."

"Will you be the bearer of a note from me to Miss Creswell? I shall be delighted to have her and her sister here, in this house, as my guests, as long as it may suit them to remain!"

"Lady Caroline! how can I thank you!"

"By asking me to do some service for you yourself, Mr. Joyce! This is merely general philanthropy!"

Marian Creswell was in great exultation, for several reasons. Mr. Joyce had hurried suddenly to London, and a report had been started that he was about to abandon the contest. That was one cause for her de-

light. Another was that the girls had evidently accepted their defeat in the last contest as final, and she should be rid of them for ever. She had noticed various preparations for departure, had seen heavy boxes lumbering the passages near their rooms, but had carefully avoided making any inquiries, and had begged her husband to do likewise.

"They will go," she said, "and it will be for the best. Either they or I must have gone, and I suppose you would prefer it should be they. It is their duty to say where they purpose going, and what they purpose doing. It will be time enough for you to refuse your consent, if the place of selection be an objectionable one, when they tell us where it is."

Two days after that conversation Mr. and Mrs. Creswell were sitting together after luncheon, when Maud entered the room. She took no notice of Marian, but said to her uncle, "Gertrude and I are going away to-morrow, uncle, for some time, if not for ever. You won't be astonished to hear it, I know, but it is our duty to tell you."

"Well, Maud, I—going away—I confess, not entirely news to me"—said Mr. Creswell, hopelessly feeble—"where are you going, child?"

"We have accepted an invitation we have received, uncle!"

"An invitation? I did not know you knew any one, Maud! From some of your old school companions?"

"No, uncle: from Lady Caroline Mansergh—a friend of Mr. Benthall's and Mr. Joyce's, uncle!"

Marian looked up, and the light of triumph faded out of her eyes. It was but an incomplete victory, after all!

AS THE CROW FLIES.

DUE EAST. HARWICH TO IPSWICH.

THE sea gives and takes all along our coast. The history of its greedy and ceaseless annexations in our island would be geologically curious and valuable. Slowly the ocean is sucking our island away, as a boy sucks a sugarplum. Harwich presents several curious instances of this. Beacon Cliff, on the south of the town, is an eminence of clay separating Orwell Haven from Walton Bay. It once had a signal-house and telegraph on its summit, and it now boasts the largest martello tower in England, mounting ten guns. With the clay stone of this hill, that hardens with exposure, Harwich is paved, and the stout walls of Orford and Framlingham Castles were long ago built. It is a clay full of fossils, bivalves, shells, and elephants' teeth.

Captain Washington, says Mr. Walcott, has measured the speed of the sea's progress at Harwich. The cliff lost ten feet between 1709 and 1756, eighty feet between 1756 and 1804, and three hundred and fifty feet between the latter date and 1841. The vicar's field has been swallowed up since 1807, and part of a battery, built in 1805, at a considerable distance from the sea, was swept away in 1829, and the ruins now overhang the shore. The sea, if not built out, will make a breach in time, the best authorities think, at Lower Dovercourt, turn the peninsula into an island, and destroy well-intentioned but somewhat somnolent Harwich. Felixstow shows other dangers awaiting Harwich. Felixstow has one charming feature—a straggling place several miles long, it has no shops, and sends for everything to Walton, a village two miles distant. In spite of a salt marsh, unsavoury at night, it is not an ugly place, for the cliffs are full of springs. There was once a castle behind the church, and a Roman fort, said still to exist, somewhere out at sea; and altogether, when it is once built, it really will be a town, and Bernard Barton, the Quaker poet, who was easily pleased, has sung of it:

On that shore where the waters of Orwell and Deben
Join the dark heaving ocean, that spot may be found—
A scene which recalls the lost beauties of Eden,
And which Fancy might hail as her own fairy ground.

Such are the delusions of local attachment. At Felixstow Point, where the cliff, from reddish yellow darkens to brown and yellow, striped black like the carcase of a mammoth tiger, the sea has been at it again. Waggon-loads of coprolites have been scratched and washed out of the cliff, and day by day, with this dangerous diminution, has grown a still more fatal gift, for the sea, changing from shallow green to grey, shows where a tongue of shingle has grown southward from Landguard Fort. This sou'-west drift of shingly sand, centuries ago, filled up the northern one of the two useful entrances to Harwich Haven, and joined this fort, originally on an island (vide old engravings), to the mainland. In 1804 this fatal "blue tongue of shingle" was five hundred feet long, and at its outer edge seven fathoms deep. The cement works dug out huge slices of fossil earth from Felixstow for "cement stone." Certain blind, selfish seekers for money removed a useful ledge of coprolite that had hitherto barred the drift at Felixstow Point. The burrowing at Beacon Cliff, on which stands Harwich Lighthouse, hastened the evil. The invisible, ceaseless workers for mischief went on. In 1841 the Demon's tongue had grown eighteen hundred feet long, and in 1859 nearly three thousand (no operation could remove it now), and, moreover, its base had reduced the practicable channel to eleven feet. Then the sleepers at last awoke. Harwich harbour spoiled, there would be no place of refuge on the east coast from the Thames to the Humber; and civilisation having had no effect as yet in emolliating the manners of the North Sea, this was important. The Admiralty had long talked

and surveyed, and now, for once, it acted. In 1847 it began a long breakwater stretching outwards from Beacon Cliff, hoping to drive, as Mr. White thoughtfully observes, the tidal scour back to the Landguard side, and to sweep away or shorten the Demon's tongue. In doing this, and dredging the shoals to the depth of eighteen feet, the Admiralty have already swept away one hundred and thirty thousand pounds of public money; but the fatal tongue is still cruel, obstinate, and devilish enough to grow, and some day, when that tongue does speak, it will scream these ominous words, "Harwich is gone," and that will be true. There is a great deal of amber and ambergris, and some shipwrecked gold among that fatal shingle, but it will never produce enough, even if found to pay, for a new Harwich.

A former governor of that same Landguard Fort that the crow has already inspected was Philip Thicknesse, the patron of that delightful painter, Thomas Gainsborough, who was the son of a small clothier at Sudbury. Thicknesse bought a fisherman's house at Felixstow, and turned it into a pretty, seaward-looking cottage. The old fort of dark red brick, with its ancient honeycombed and probably useless guns, was built by James the First against the Spaniards, and was useful in Charles the Second's time against the dogged Dutch, who in 1667, in their daring days after De Ruyter's battles with Monk, and before we finally quelled them, and swept the seas of their clumsy vessels, actually landed three thousand men here. The crow likes to associate the old fort garden, with its ragged tamarisks and views of the expanding Woodbridge Haven, with that delightful Suffolk painter whose cottage children are so artless and so simple, and whose glorious portraits of Lady Lyndoch, the wilful young beauty, and of the Blue Boy, most sturdy of lads, surpass even Reynolds in grace and nature.

Up the Orwell, here wide as an arm of the sea, and snakily winding between flat muddy reaches and broad sloping green meadows that rise to woody uplands, we skim past Grimston Hall, the birthplace of Thomas Cavendish, the first Englishman who followed Drake's track round the world. Cavendish fitted out three ships against the robbing and murdering Spaniards, and sailed from Plymouth in 1586, six years after Drake. He took great prizes, among others an Acapulco galleon brimming with gold, returned home in 1588, squandered his money like a brave, foolish buccaneer as he was, sailed forth again, greedy for more, tried fortune too far, and died off the coast of Brazil in 1592.

These estuaries breed sailors. A little further up the Orwell stands Nacton, where another man, brave and unfortunate as Cavendish, once lived. Admiral Vernon was a Staffordshire man, son of a secretary of state to King William the Third. He had fought under Rooke (which is naturally a very interesting fact to the crow) at Malaga. After many great services he sailed with a brave squadron to

South America, and all but destroyed Porto Bello. In 1741, the fickle nation was enraged at his repulse at Carthagena. On his return home he was employed to patrol and guard the Kent and Sussex coasts during the Pretender's rebellion, but, acting in opposition to the ministers, was suspended and struck off the list of admirals. The London people illuminated in his honour, and there were riots in consequence. Walpole has constant mention of the admiral and his factious supporters and opponents. The Admiralty, however, never gave him another chance.

The crow is now in Suffolk, and knowing what he is about even there, drops upon Ipswich, "the Eye of Suffolk," built so pleasantly on its hill-slope, with a park at its brow, and a quay at its foot. The channel of the Orwell is very narrow between Nacton and Ipswich, and only great energy and labour could have made it navigable so far as twelve miles from the sea, for vessels drawing thirteen feet of water. At the lock hard by the town the Gipping joins the Orwell.

In spite of Ransomes' factory, with its dozen busy acres tenanted by one thousand workmen, Wolsey is the great name that haunts one in Ipswich. This great Ipswich man, who all but attained the Papacy, was born in this pleasant Suffolk town in 1471, and was educated in the Ipswich Grammar School. He went to Magdalene College, Oxford, studied hard, and became in one term fellow and tutor. In 1500, while curate in Somersetshire, where he was rather dissolute and wild, he is said to have been on one occasion put in the stocks by Sir Amias Pawlett, an indignity the proud priest never forgot. When he came to be chancellor, years after, he confined Sir Amias to the Temple, and made him build, as a punishment, that old house, now a hairdresser's, near the gate, a little to the west of Chancery-lane. The butcher's son soon working his way to court, in 1508 became chaplain to Henry the Seventh, and his ambassador to Brussels. His course upward was then easy. Fox, Bishop of Winchester, introduced Wolsey to the young King Henry, in order to supplant the Earl of Surrey, and Wolsey soon grew the king's boon companion as well as minister. Flattering him and sharing his pleasures, he grew so indispensable that he was by turns made almoner to the king, privy councillor, canon of Windsor, registrar of the garter, dean of York, bishop of Lincoln, archbishop of York, and chancellor. The temporalities of Bath and Wells, Worcester, and Hereford were given him, and first the bishopric of Durham and then that of Winchester. The Pope made him cardinal and legate, the French king gave him a bishopric, the French regent sent him a present of one hundred thousand crowns; the emperor, in compensation for his two disappointments of the papacy (Julius the Second and Leo the Tenth), awarded him a pension of nine thousand crowns of gold and two bishoprics. But the king's divorce from Katherine of Arragon led to Wolsey's ruin. Anne Boleyn looked

upon the proud cardinal as her enemy. He fell, as Shakespeare says, like Lucifer, never to rise again. The king stripped the gourd leaf by leaf. Henry, with one hand, seized York-place, renaming it Whitehall, and with the other clutched at Hampton Court. Wolsey's retinue of one hundred persons was disbanded. Even his cloth of gold and silver hangings were taken by the master who had given them. His gold plate was confiscated. He was accused by his enemies of claiming equal rank with the king and of monopolising royal power, and that was nearly all that could be alleged. Wolsey might have been

A man of most unbounded stomach.

He certainly, to judge by his portraits (always we believe in profile), was uncommonly stout, but he was also a man of grand views, of princely generosity, and of far-seeing and honourable ambition. It speaks well for him that his servants loved him, and that he fell at last only from resisting a wicked and unjust divorce. Above all, we honour him for having founded Christ Church and Ipswich College. Wolsey's Tudor gateway of Ipswich College of moulded red bricks, still standing on the east side of St. Peter's churchyard, is now the entrance of a private house. It looks rather helpless, and leans over towards the street. Ipswich College had first been an Austin Canon's Priory, founded in 1177, and rebuilt in the reign of Richard Cœur-de-Lion. Wolsey suppressed the old priory, and founded a college for a dean, twelve secular canons, eight clerks, and eight choristers, to the honour of the Virgin Mary, and also a grammar school, which he designed as a nursery for his great college at Oxford. In his lavish way he then endowed the college with all the lands of ten suppressed monasteries. Henry the Eighth gave the college lands to one Thomas Alverde, and James the First bestowed them on Richard Percival and Edmund Duffield. It is a singular fact, that "up to within the last ten years," says Mr. Walter White, writing in 1865, "there was a Wolsey, a butcher, living in this town—a fact which leads me to imagine an unbroken succession of butchers of the same name from the days of the original Wolsey."

Skelton, the rugged satirist, who had to fly from Wolsey's wrath and take sanctuary at Westminster, has left some savage verses on the proud "butcher's cur," who snubbed the nobles at the Privy Council, and struck them dumb by one dash of his hand upon the table. Sir Thomas More has also (according to Dr. Wordsworth) sketched Wolsey in his "full-blown dignity." He describes him sitting alone at dinner under the dais in his hall, and asking his courtiers how they liked an oration he had just delivered. "Then I ween," says More, "no man eat another morsel of meat. Every man was fallen into so deep a study for the finding of some exquisite praise, for he that should have brought out but a vulgar and a common commendation would have thought himself *shamed for ever*. Then said we our sentences

by row as we sat, from the lowest unto the highest, in good order, as it had been a great matter of the common weal in a right solemn counsaile. A world it was to see how a man before me marked every man's word, and the more proper it was the worse he liked it for the cumbrance that he had to study out a better to pass it. He even sweat with his labour, so that he was fain, now and then, to wipe his face. This man when he had to speak said nothing, and yet surpassed all the preceding flatterers who had exhausted trope and metaphor upon the subject. For as he were ravished unto heavenward with the wonder of the wisdom and eloquence that my Lord's Grace had uttered in that oracyon, he fette a long sigh with an oh! from the bottom of his heart, and held up both his hands, and lift up his head, and cast up his eyes unto the welkin, and wept." What an Hogarthian picture of a coarse flatterer. No king could have lived more sumptuously than Wolsey; even his head cook wore damask and satin, and had a chain of gold round his neck. In his chapel he kept twelve singing boys, and in his private ecclesiastical processions it was not unusual to count forty-one wearers of sumptuous copes, besides cross-bearers and pillar-bearers. Forty cup-bearers, carvers, and servers waited at his table, and nine or ten lords were daily in attendance on him. He had forty-six yeomen of the chamber, and kept sixteen doctors and chaplains to say daily mass. His four running footmen were superbly apparelled, and he had also constantly in attendance a herald, a physician, four minstrels, a tent-keeper, an armourer, and other servants, and to every officer, gentleman, or young lord in his court he allowed two or three domestics.

Cavendish, Wolsey's faithful and loyal gentleman usher, has left an elaborate account of the Cardinal's appearance and state as he rode daily to Westminster Hall or through Thames-street to take boat and meet the King at Greenwich. He would emerge from his privy chamber at York House (afterwards Whitehall) attired in the flowing splendour of scarlet or crimson taffety, or damask, "a round pilion on his head, with a noble of black velvet on its inner side." Round his neck would be a tippet of costly sables, and he held in his hand an orange filled with a sponge dipped in aromatic vinegar to smell at in the crowd, or when he was pestered with importunate suitors. Before him was always borne first the great seal of England, and, secondly, the scarlet Cardinal's hat, both carried by noblemen or gentlemen, bareheaded. From his presence chamber he set forth with two huge silver crosses upraised before him, followed by two men, carrying tall pillars of silver, and a pur-suivant-at-arms, carrying a large silver gilt mace. The gentlemen ushers cried out, "On my lords and masters, on before; make way for my Lord's Grace!" And at the hall door he mounted a mule trapped in crimson velvet with gilt stirrups. His cross-bearers were mounted upon horses trapped in red, and near him always marched four footmen carrying gilt

pole-axes. No wonder choleric Harry soon grew jealous of such a rival!

Ipswich can boast of very old houses. The Grammar School was once the refectory of a Dominican friary, built in the reign of Henry the Third. The brick town-hall was once part of St. Mildred's Church, erected in 1449. The Tankard public-house was once the mansion of Sir A. Wingfield (temp. Henry the Eighth). The archdeacon's house, near St. Mary-at-Tower, was built in 1471, the very year of Wolsey's birth. Sparrow's House, says Mr. Walcott, an excellent judge of these matters, is a fine specimen of domestic architecture of Charles the Second's reign, and in the side streets through which the Orwell creascents there are many fine old Tudor buildings, and none finer than "the Old House," now a bookseller's, which is very quaint, with its carved panels, pilasters, and brackets.

AN ELIZABETHAN ADVENTURER.

ADVENTURES were to the adventurers in Queen Elizabeth's time in the largest sense of the words. The British subject of those days, who left his native shores, had no occasion to seek for exciting incidents to give colour to his travel. They crowded on him thick and fast, crossing his course in rapid succession, and now and then crushing a hapless wayfarer remorselessly out of existence. To danger and difficulty, however, the stubborn Englishman opposed daring and enterprise, and followed fortune where he listed. Wild spirits carried their turbulence from home to expend it in fighting the Spaniard "beyond the line," or in sharing the perils of a continental campaign. Treaties might be made between London and Madrid, but there was no peace then, nor for many a day afterwards, on "the Spanish Main," where "gentlemen adventurers" fought stoutly on their own account, sometimes for honour, but always for gold. Chronic war is the phrase, perhaps, which best describes the state of Europe. There was always fighting in one quarter or other sufficient to give occupation to the wandering apprentices of the trade of arms. The Mediterranean was infested by Mahomedan rovers, who strove earnestly to give the sea-going Christian an opportunity of varying his experiences by a probation of slavery. All beyond the Mediterranean and Central Europe was a terra incognita, shrouded in dim haze, and peopled by the popular imagination with strange and uncouth forms. These were the days when Prester John had an acknowledged existence somewhere in Africa, or Asia—authorities differed; when the great Cham of Tartary was a mighty potentate; when Golconda had store of diamonds; when the loadstone mountain of eastern seas drew the iron bolts out of ships; and when the "voyages of Sindbad the Sailor" would have been accepted by the mass as truthful narratives of discovery and adventure.

Several of the *obscure English*, who wandered beyond their island limits at this period,

set the example, since too faithfully followed, of rushing into print with accounts of their wanderings. But, unlike most of their modern imitators, the Elizabethan travellers had stories worth telling. Some of the narratives are of considerable interest in themselves, and derive more from the quaint simplicity of their narrators. One of these, which was very popular in the author's lifetime, bears the title—almost a story per se—"The rare and most wonderful things which Edward Webbe, an Englishman borne, hath seene and passed in his troublesome trauailles in the cities of Ierusalem, Damasko, Bethelem, and Gallye: and in the landes of Iewrie, Egipt, Gtecia, Russia, and in the land of Prester Iohn. Wherein is set forth his extreame slauerie sustained many yeres together in the gallies and wars of the great Turk against the lands of Persia, Tartaria, Spaine, and Portugall, with the manner of his releasement, and coming into Englande in May last" [1589]. In the course of these long wanderings and vicissitudes, Webbe inevitably saw much that was strange and beyond the experience of the narrow home life; and what he saw he tells roundly.

The traveller, who was born at "St. Katharine's, neere the Tower," in 1554, was the son of Richard Webbe, master gunner of England. His father's influence procured the younger Webbe, at the early age of twelve, a post in the train of Captain Anthony Jenkinson, on the third mission of that officer as ambassador from England to Russia. In this service he resided "some space in the head cittie of Russia, called Musko," and began those observations of men and manners which he committed to the press in the leisure of after life. He particularly notes that the Russians "are a kind of tyrannous people, as appeareth by their customs," one of the latter being a pleasant fashion of punishing debtors by a daily infliction of blows "on the shinnes or on the foreheade" with a wooden mallet. A ready mode of getting rid of peers who made themselves disagreeable to the sovereign is thus described: "I also noted that if any nobleman do offend ye Emperor of Russia, the saide nobleman is taken and imprisoned with al his children and kinsfolkes, and the first great frost that commeth (for the cuntrey is wonderfully cold, and subiect to much frost) there is a great hole made in the ise over some great river, and then the partie principal is put in, and after him his wife, his children, and all other his kinsfolkes, and so leave none of his posteritie to possesse his lands or goodes, but the same are bestowed upon others at the emperor's pleasure."

While Webbe was in Moscow in attendance upon Captain Jenkinson, the city was besieged and taken by the Crim Tartars, into whose hands the English lad fell in the confusion consequent upon the assault, and was carried by his captors into slavery in the Crimea. In this wretched thralldom, where he was literally a hewer of wood and drawer of water, beaten thrice a week with a "horse-tayle"—a curious but characteristically Cossack instrument of

flagellation—poor Webbe spent five miserable years. Finding means eventually to communicate with his relatives, he was ransomed for three hundred crowns of “vij. s. vj. d. a piece, of English money,” which is equivalent to a very considerable sum in our day, and shows that Webbe’s family was in affluent circumstances. His hard servitude with the Tartars appears to have dulled his powers of observation, for his sole remark regarding them is, “Among that people called ye Tartarians I noted especially this one thing, that their children, being new borne, do never open their eyes untill they be ix. dayes and ix. nights olde.” With all respect for Mr. Webbe’s veracity, and carefulness in “noting,” only what he “saw,” it must be admitted that he seems to be pulling the long bow in attributing to the Tartar infants a peculiarity of puppies. On returning to England, he “staied some smale time” to recruit, it may be assumed, after his sufferings in slavery.

Undeterred by the memory of past misfortune, Webbe sailed again for Russia—this time with the trading fleet—but in what capacity he does not mention. On the voyage the ships, which were convoyed by a man-of-war, encountered a squadron of five Danish pirates, which they attacked and captured, carrying the vessels into Narva, whither the fleet was bound. “There,” Webbe writes in his pithy way, “the men [the pirates] were massacred in this manner by the Russians: first great stakes driven into the ground, and they spitted vpon Powles, as a man woulde put a pig vpon a spitte, and so vij. score were handled in that manner in very tyrannous sort.” Webbe was still haunted by misfortune. Twelve miles out of port, on the voyage home, his ship was wrecked, and he lost all he had. His reverse did not affect him seriously, for he says quite simply that he “came againe into Englande and gathered a new stocke.”

Once more Webbe tempted fate upon the ocean, sailing, as master gunner of the Henry, of London, on a trading cruise up the Mediterranean. In this sea, the greatest mishap of his life befel the adventurous but unfortunate voyager. He narrates the event as follows: “But heere fortune began to lowre on me againe, and turne her wheele in such sort against me, as that I was soone after brought to liue in greater slauerie than ever I did before; for we, hauing sadlie arriued at Alexandria, discharged our burthen, and fraughted our ship with great store of that cuntrey commodities, and returning back to Legorne, suddenly in the way we met with fiftie saile of the Turkes gallies, with which gallies we fought two dayes and two nights, and made great slaughter amongst their men, we being in all but three score men, very weake for such a multytude, and having lost fifty of sixty men, faintnes constrained vs for to yeeld vnto them, by reason we wanted winde to helpe our selues withall; and the calme was so great a helpe vnto them as there was no way for vs to escape.” Webbe, as modest as he was brave, relates this gallant action without the slightest trace of pride in its daring obstinacy of resist-

ance to an overwhelming force. Indeed he is rather apologetic than otherwise for the ship having been taken at all, notwithstanding the odds against which she fought. The Turks had not the generosity to treat their brave enemies with humanity. Luckless Webbe and nine shipmates, who were found living when the Henry was boarded, were soundly bastinadoed. The prisoners were despatched to Constantinople, where, as was the custom with Christian captives, they were sent to the galleys and barbarously treated. Loaded with chains, half starved, and cruelly beaten, Webbe passed six years at the oar. But on the outbreak of war between Turkey and Persia, his knowledge of gunnery stood him in good stead, and he was attached to the artillery of the Sultan’s army. His notes regarding the places he visited at this time, give one an amusing idea of “travellers’ wonders” three hundred years ago.

Cairo, he states, “is threescore miles in compasse, and is the greatest cittie in the world. It standeth vpon the riuier of Nilo, and in the said cittie there is twelve thousand churches, which they tearme muscots. . . . The houses are of a very olde building, all of lyme and stone, and in most of the houses the roofes are couered with fine gold in a very workemanly sort.” The phenomenon of the inundation of the Nile of course attracted his notice; but not being well up in hydrostatics, he describes it rather oddly as a “swelling of the water vpright without any stay at all, on the one side thereof it is to ye height of a huge mountain!” It is difficult to recognise the crocodile in the following description: “In the river of Nilo there is long fishes that are of tenne or twelve foote long, which swimmeth neere the shore; they are called the fishes of King Pharao, they are like vnto a dolphin. These fishes are so subtile, that swimming neere the shore side they will pull men or women sodeinly into the river and deuoure them.” Webbe is at no loss whatever in solving the problem of the Pyramids, though his solution differs materially from that attained by Professor Piazzi Smith. He says, “Moreover, in the land of Egypt, neere to the river of Nilo, within sixe miles of the Gran Caer, there are seauen mountaines builded on the out side like vnto ye point of a diamond, which mountaines were builded in King Pharoos time for to keepe corne in, and they are mountaines of great strength. It is also saide, that they were builded about that time when Ioseph did lade home his brethrens asses with corne, in the time of the great dearth mentioned in the Scripture: at which time all their corne lay in those mountaines.”

From Egypt the captive gunner passed to Syria, where he relates, “There is a river that no lew can catch any fish in at all, and yet in the same river there is great store of fish like vnto samon trouts. But let a Christian or a Turke come thither and fish for them, and eyther of them shall catch them in great aboundance, if they do but put their hande into the water with a little bread and an hundred will be about his hande.” This is rather

hard on the Hebrews, but it may be questioned whether in this passage Mr. Webbe has not forgotten a prefatory protest that "in this booke there is nothing mentioned or expressed but that which is of truth: and what mine own eies have perfectly scene."

During Webbe's campaigning with the Turks in Asia, he asserts that they waged war with that doubtful entity "Prester Iohn," of whose court he gives an account which is strongly suggestive of the worthy narrator having been an ancestor of the veracious Baron Munchausen. The story is curious enough to be worth quotation. "This Prester Iohn," writes Webbe, "is a king of great power and keepeth a very beautifull court, after the manner of that cuntrey, and hath every day to serve him at his table, sixty kinges wearing leaden crownes on their heads, and those serve in the meat vnto Prester Iohn's table: and continually the first dish of meat set vpon his table is a dead man's scull, cleane picked, and laide in black earth: putting him in minde that he is but earth, and that he must die, and shal become earth againe." The appetites must have been sharp set that were not scared away by such a ghastly reminder. "In this Court of Prester Iohn there is a wilde man, and an other in the high street at Constantinople whose allowance is every day a quarter of raw mutton; and when any man dyeth for some notorious offence, then are they allowed every day a quarter of man's flesh. These wilde men are chained fast to a post every day, the one in Prester Iohn's Court, and the other in the high street of Constantinople, each of them having a mantel cast about their shoulders, and all over their bodies they have wonderfull long haire, they are chained fast by the neck, and will speedily devour any man that cometh in their reach. There is also a beast in the Court of Prester Iohn called arians, having four heads; they are in shape like a wilde cat, and are of the height of a great mastif dog. In this court, likewise, there is foules caled pharases, foules whose feathers are very beautifull to be worne, these foules are as big as a turkie, their flesh is very sweet, and their feathers of all manner of collours. There is swannes in that place, which are as lardge again as the swannes of Englande are, and their feathers are as blew as any blew cloath. I have seen in a place like a park, adjoining vnto Prester Iohn's Court, three score and seventene unicorns and elephants, **all alive** at one time, and they were so tame that I have played with them as one would play with young lambes. When Prester Iohn is served at his table, there is no salt at all set one [on], in any salt cellar as in other places, but a loafe of bread is cut crosse, and then two knives are layde acrossse vpon the loafe, and some salt put vpon the blades of the knives and no more." This last little bit of commonplace about the great Presbyter's table service is rather in the manner of De Foe, and casts an imposing air of truthfulness over the romancing in which the story-teller has just previously indulged.

After his Asiatic campaigning was over, and

Webbe had returned to slavery and wretchedness in Constantinople, he made an attempt to escape with five hundred of his fellow-captives. Their plan was "to breake a wall of fourteen foote broad, made of earth, lyme, and sand, which we greatly moistened with strong vinegar" (Webbe must have read of Hannibal's chemical experiment on the Alpine masses) "so that the wall being made moist there with through the help of a spike of yron five hundred of vs had almost escaped out of prison." But the attempt was frustrated by the barking of a dog, more vigilant than its masters, and Webbe and his companions were dragged back to captivity by their jailers, "who gave vs," he reports with rueful humour, "in recompence of our paines taking herein, seaven hundred blowes a peece upon the naked skinne, *viz.* three hundred on the belly, and foure hundred on the back." Release at length came through the intervention of "Maister Harborne, ambassadour to Constantinople for the Company of Marchants," and Webbe set out overland for England, eager to visit the place of his birth after an absence of upwards of twelve years passed in slavery to the unbeliever.

His journey home exposed him to almost as much hardship and persecution as he had encountered at the hands of the Turks. It was customary in Catholic countries in those days to roast perverse heretics in honour of the true religion, and Webbe was more than once in peril of the stake. At Venice he was accused of being a "hereticke," but contrived to get out of the difficulty by paying a fine of fifteen crowns towards finishing the Virgin's shrine at Padua; and had the satisfaction of having his accuser "an Englishman who lived in the stato of a Frier," punished for bearing false witness. By the Duke of Ferrara he was "wel entertained and liberally rewarded with a horse and five and twentie crownes for the sake of the Queenes Maiestie of England." In Rome Webbe continued "nineteene daies in trouble with the Pope and the English Cardinall Doctor Allen, a notable Arch papist," but these high authorities ultimately allowed him to pass, and, understanding that he had been a long time captive in Turkey, generously gave him twenty-five crowns. His troubles in the Eternal City were not over, however. Before he left he was again taken—this time by "ye English Colledge," and "put there into the holy house 3 daies with a fooles coate on my backe halfe blew, half yellowe, and a cockes combe with three bells on my head, from whence I was holpen by means of an Englishman whom I found there, and presented my petition and cause to the Pope, who again set me at libertie."

Proceeding to Naples, Webbe was once more overtaken by the ill-fortune which so persistently followed him by sea and land. A Genoese apprehended him and brought him before the viceroy on a charge of being "a man of great knowledge and an English spie." On this information the authorities consigned Webbe "to a darke Dungeon xvi daies" while inquiry was made into his antecedents. The investigation does not seem to have satisfied his Neapolitan

jailers, for they "put him to the question," i.e., tortured him. Their method of extracting evidence from an unwilling witness was diabolically clever in its cruelty. The process is thus described by the sufferer: "Thrice had I ye strapado, hoisted vp backward with my hands bound behinde me, which strooke all the ioynts in my armes out of ioynt, and then constrained me to drinke salt water and quick lime, and then fine Lawne or Callico thrust down my throate and pluckt vp againe ready to pluck my hart out of my belly" (Webbe is weak in physiology) "al to make me confesse that I was an English spie. After this, there were four bard horses prepared to quarter me, and I was still threatened to die except I would confesse some thing to my harme." All their tortures proved unavailing with the stout Englishman, who "endured seven months in this miserie," but, as before among the Mahomedans, now among the Christians, his knowledge of artillery proved of service, and he was employed in "a gunners Roome, at a salary of 35 crowns a month." Pining still for his native country, Webbe took advantage of the sailing of three English vessels homeward bound, and escaped in the Grace of London, by the help of Nicholas Nottingham, master. "Thus," he writes, "came I into England with great joy and hearts delight, both to myselfe and all my acquaintance."

He mentions with grateful acknowledgment, in reference to his liberation from slavery at Constantinople, the bounty of the citizens of London, who appear to have given liberally of their means towards the ransom of captives. Passing allusion is also made to the steadfast piety of the slaves, which enabled them to resist, as well the allurements of their proselytising masters, as the tortures to which they were subjected for refusing to abandon the cross for the crescent. Webbe says of himself, with unsophisticated sincerity, touching in its earnestness, "Though I were but a simple man void of learning, yet stil I had in remembrance that Christ dyed for me as appeareth by the Holy Scriptures, and that Christ therein saith: *He that denyeth me before men I will deny him before my father which is in heaven:* and againe he saith, *Whosoever beleuieth on me shall be saved and haue life euerlasting.* This comfort made me resolute, that I would rather suffer al the torments of death in the worlde, then to deny my Saviour and Redeemer Christ Iesus."

Webbe spent six months in England visiting his friends, and then his restless spirit prompted him again to venture abroad. He passed into France, where he took service with Henry of Navarre, who was then at war with the League. This prince gave the English adventurer the appointment of "chiefe maister gunner in the felde;" and in this capacity Webbe saw "the white plume shine," at the famous battle of Ivry, where he informs us, "I gave three charges vppon the enemye, and they in steede thereof, gave vs fifteen shot, and yet God be thanked prevailed not against vs." The field was very hard fought, and the gunners had their full share of the work. "There," the narrator states, "were wee constrained to make

bulwarkes of the dead bodies of our enemies and of the carcasses of dead horses; where for my paines taking that day the king greatlye commended me and honourably rewarded me." The favour in which the soldier of fortune was held at court aroused the jealousy of the French artillery officers. "These lewde gunners," Webbe says in his quaint way, "practised against me, and gave me poyson in drinke that night; which thing when the king vnderstoode he gaue order to the gouernor of Deepe, that his phisition should presently see vnto me, who gaue mespeadely unicorn's horne to drinke, and then by God and the king's great goodnesse, I was againe restored to my former health." This is the last event in his personal experiences which Webbe records. And now, after an interval of nearly three hundred years, the curious autobiography is revived by Mr. Edward Arber, in the interesting series of English reprints, which he edits with much care. Whether Webbe does not require to be taken with at least as many grains of salt as Prester John used, is another question.

TWO TO ONE.

"Do not speak of the mischievous urchin,"
Was my mother's unceasing refrain;
"He fulfils every promise of pleasure
With shame, disappointment, and pain.
Though young, when your friend he's a serpent;
Though little, a giant, your foe."
How strange! that a child, and so naughty,
To maidens full grown can work woe.
Yet one evening my cousin and Colin,
Where violets bloom in the wood
Like the sky shedding blue through the branches,
Were calling him all that is good.
They murmured, in passionate whispers,
His praises; then worshipped anew,
Till my heart beat quite fast as I listened,
And I wondered which story was true.
By chance (so he said) I met Robin,
And mentioned the doubt I was in.
His busy black eyes became downcast,
And he blushed from his hat to his chin;
"Single-handed in vain I have fought him."
He sighed: "Your dear mother is right;
But the boy we together might conquer,
Being then two to one in the fight."
I agreed. We began with a struggle,
On sealing the bond in his way;
Next, with jealousy, heart-ache, and pouting,
Love seemed to be losing the day.
But his art! spite of mother's remonstrance,
Backed by cousin, how think you he won?
By reducing the odds down to even,
And turning us two into ONE.

PUEBLA

AND THE VIVANDIÈRE.

"RATAPLAN, plan, plan! Rataplan, plan, plan! Plan!" These were the sounds we heard as we entered Puebla; nor was there much surcease in this staccato of drumming during the time we abode in the City of the Angels.

It was a fiesta, a holiday, and the angelic people were dressed in their Sunday best. A Poblana peasant woman is

a very comely sight to look upon, and in smartness of attire may vie with the muchacha of the Valley of Hicho y Ansó, or even with the famous Maja of Seville. A white chemise of the manta, or fine cotton cloth woven at Tepic, and trimmed with lace round the neck and sleeves, which last are plaited; a short petticoat of two colours, scarlet and black stuff beneath, and amber satin above; a crimson satin jacket embroidered with gold, open in front and without sleeves; the hair plaited in two long tails behind, which are turned up and passed through a golden ring; long earrings of gold hammered into rude patterns, and at least four necklaces of coral, and amber, and mock pearls, interspersed with crosses and blessed medals—these are the principal portions of the Poblana's attire. Nor must a long broad sash of bright colours be forgotten, tied behind, and into the front of which is stuck a dirty cigar-case. Then, a small striped handkerchief of silk is fastened at the throat by a silver brooch. The Poblana seldom wears the mantilla, so dear, and indeed so essential, to the costume of a Castilian dame. The Mexican substitute for the mantilla is the *riboso**—a scarf, generally, of some very dark colour and of a striped pattern. The thread is almost as fine as that of a Cashmere shawl, but—let it not be told in Gath—it is from cotton thread only that this scarf is woven. I brought a *riboso* home with me as a present to a lady. She was exceedingly disgusted when I confessed to the cotton of the fabric, but was somewhat mollified when I mentioned the fact that her *riboso* had cost me five ounces of gold, or nearly twenty pounds. I have seen, in Mexico City, *ribosos* worth a hundred pounds. This picture, however, of the Poblana would be sadly incomplete did I omit to mention her dainty shoes and stockings. The invariable gear for her graceful extremities is composed of pink silk stockings, open-worked in front, and white satin shoes, sandalled. Her ankles, as a rule, look as though they had been turned in a lathe, and the insteps of

her feet are most delicately arched. Her satin shoes have no heels; it is only the flat-footed who require artificial heels.

Crowds of these Poblanas and their attendant cavaliers were gathered round the Fonda de las Diligencias when our carriage drew up. The costume of the attendant cavaliers was—if I may use an expression unsanctified by the authority of either Johnson or Richardson, Webster or Worcester—generally “grubby.” The Mexican cavalier appears to the best advantage under the influence of photography. He makes a capital *carte de visite*. His oval face, high cheek bones, flashing black eyes, and long drooping moustaches; his gaily braided jacket and chappareros, or overalls of leather, with puffs of the white linen drawers beneath bulging through the slashes of the trousers; his sash full of daggers and pistols; his striped blanket cloak, which, in the day time, hangs over his left shoulder, but which has a hole in the centre through which, at night, he puts his head; his huge plated spurs, and, finally, his coach-wheel hat of enormous circumference, with a “pudding” round the low crown to protect him from sunstroke; all these give him, in photography, a dashing, devil-may-care, and essentially romantic appearance, which claims for him at once a place in the picture-gallery of theatrical scoundrels. But he shouldn't be seen out of a photograph. His lights and shades, translated only in black and white, leave nothing to be desired on the score of picturesqueness; but when you come to look at him in the flesh, and examine his attire in its hues and textures, you will discover your Mexican caballero to be a dirty, ragged, sooty, unsavoury varlet. His leathern jacket and overalls will be found torn by briars, patched, and smirched by stains of pulque, and sometimes of blood. His coach-wheel hat turns out to be battered as regards the brim, and “caved in” about the region of the crown. His sash is a greasy old rag, and his toes are peeping through his upper-leathers. You have seen an Italian brigand on the stage? Yes; and there are photographers in the Via Condotti, Rome, who persuade more or less genuine highwaymen from Terracina or Albano to come and sit to them, in order that they may sell their effigies to the Forestieri at three pauls apiece. How very picturesque they look, both at the theatres royal and in the print-shops in the Corso, with their peaked hats, their velvet smalls, their medals of the Ma-

* The *riboso* is the universal head and shoulder covering of the Mexican female, from the highest to the lowest grades. It is not exactly in accordance with etiquette to make any early morning calls in Mexico; but should you happen to have the honour to be received, during the forenoon, either by a countess or a shopkeeper's wife, you may, on entering the saloon of the señora, reckon on four things; that the señora will be *mal peinada*, or unkempt; that her uncombed locks will be shrouded by a *riboso*; that she will be smoking a *papelito*; and that, at no great distance from her, there will be a cup of *chocolate*.

donna, and their "ribbons, chains, and sashes"! But did you ever see a convoy of brigand prisoners brought into Rome through the Porta del Popolo by the Pope's dragoons? In a waggon, on Indian corn straw, and perhaps with a few leafy boughs humanely arched over them to keep away the flies (if the captives be badly wounded), sprawl half a dozen incredibly horrible and miserable creatures, chained hand and foot, their lean bodies half draped in greasy tatters. They are unshaven and unkempt, blood has dried upon their faces, foam has dried upon their lips; and foul clouts, in lieu of the perky peaked hats with the streaming ribbons, are bound around their heads. Now and again they begin to growl and wriggle and kick, in the straw, like the cubs of some wild beast in a den; and then the Pope's dragoons ride up and hit them sounding thwacks with the flat of their sabres. It is quite as probable that Claude du Val, the ladies' highwayman, who is just now taking the town with comic songs and breakdowns at a London theatre (the rascal, as every student of the Newgate Calendar knows, was a turned-off lacquey of the Duchess of Cleveland's) was just as deplorable and repulsive a ragamuffin as any one of these tatterdemalions on the maize stalks. As for Jack Sheppard, I bought a contemporary etching of him lately as he sat in the condemned hold in Newgate, shackled and padlocked to the floor, and with I know not how many hundredweight of iron on his wrists and ankles. The etching is not a flattering one. He looks the vulgar, gin-drinking housebreaker that he was, and a very different Jack Sheppard from the trim little figure in loud clothes and silk stockings who used to fascinate us at the Theatre Royal, Adelphi. A hundred years hence, perhaps, at the Theatre Royal, Salisbury Plain (one of the suburbs of London, within five minutes' balloon journey of the Bank), Bill Bodger of Flower-and-Dean-street, Spitalfields, now lying in Newgate awaiting the advent of Mr. Calcraft, in connexion with that little affair in the Minorities, and his jumping on the old lady aged seventy-three, and robbing her after death of a five-pound note and a set of false teeth, may appear as Bodger the brave, the Hero of the East-end. Miss Tightlegs may enact Bill, and her shorts and ankle jacks may entrance the town.

It is but due to the Mexican caballero to admit that he has one advantage over his *European brothers in blackguardism*. He

is a first-rate horseman, and his movements, when mounted, being necessarily rapid and shifting, you lose sight of his rags and his dirt in the picturesqueness of his ensemble. His business, in nine cases out of ten (at least, this was the case in 1864), is to rob the stage coach, or to connive at the robbery, and foregather with the robbers thereof; but, astride on his nag in his high demi-pique saddle, with his lasso wound round the cantel, and his long lance with its gay-coloured pennon sticking from one of his stirrups, the fellow has something semi-military about him. He becomes a member of some very irregular corps of very irregular cavalry. You may ask why the French, while in military occupation of Mexico, permitted these hordes of savage-looking vagabonds—and the majority of their number were really as savage as they looked—to ride, armed to the teeth, through the streets of the towns they held, and into their very barrack-yards? The answer is simple. Why did they not disarm the well-affected population, in order to prevent them from becoming disaffected? They could not help themselves. If you went to a whist party at a friend's house in Mexico after nightfall, you took care to walk in the middle of the roadway when you returned home, and with a loaded revolver in each hand, lest robbery and assassination should be lurking in the doorways. I went to a little Protestant church, once, among the mountains in the great silver-mining district of Aral del Mente. We were escorted, having ladies with us, by a troop of lancers: gentlemen who had once been highwaymen, but who were now paid by the mining company a dollar a day and the keep of a horse, each, to be honest and protect travellers. As we entered the pretty little place of worship, the congregation left their revolvers and sabres and Sharpe's rifles on the vestry-room table, to shoulder or buckle them on again after the benediction. And, on returning to Mexico, to attend a grand dinner and ball, our departure was delayed for some time because the brass field-piece which was to form part of our equipment was not quite ready. Thus the peaceable and honest were compelled to arm, in order to repel the onslaughts of the bloodthirsty and dishonest. The French had scarcely any light cavalry, and, to patrol the roads and scour the country of the guerrilleros, were fain to employ native mercenaries. It was the principle of setting thieves to catch thieves, but very frequently Marshal

Bazaine was incited to catch both thieves and thief-catchers, and hang or shoot them all impartially. Deprive the people of their arms, the French could not. The rancheros, or farmers, pleaded that without guns, swords, and lances, they could not hold their "haciendas," and that, in order to carry on their agricultural pursuits, their sons, stock-keepers, and labourers, must all be armed. Hence the crowd of cavaliers, mounted and unmounted, in Puebla, with daggers and pistols stuck in their girdles.

When we had brushed from our garments a few of the innumerable layers of dust which had been accumulating there for the best part of a week, we proceeded to take a walk about the City of the Angels. The canonigo had his breviary to say, and we left him reciting it in his bedroom at the hotel, smoking his cigar meanwhile. I thought it strange, when we descended into the streets, that the angelic chorus should be "Rataplan, plan, plan, plan!"—an incessant and most intolerable drumming. But it was not the Poblana who drummed. Not so much as a tambourine was banged by the Poblana. They twang a little on the guitar, and dance prettily enough to that wiry music; but this melancholy race, in their fiestas even, are sad: the Indians, save when they get tipsy on "pulque," always appear to be musing on the decadence of the Aztec race, and to be preoccupied by internal visions of Montezuma's ghost; while the half-castes are perpetually absorbed in schemes for robbing the stage-coach and cutting the throats of capitalists; and the whole-castes, or pure white Spaniards, dwell with moody affection on the good old days of the viceroys and the monks, and brood over the memory of Cortes. Mexico is a country in which every man seems to have something on his mind; and the shadow of *La Noche Triste*—I have a piece of the bark of the tree against which the conquistador set his back on that fearful night when all the causeways ran with blood—yet hangs over the land.

The rataplans came from the French. They had only recently taken the city by storm. They had a strong garrison in Puebla, and seemed determined to make their presence felt, by continuous reverberations of sheepskin. Shade of old John Ziska—did he not, when dying, order that his skin might be tanned to cover a drum withal, that his foes might be frightened after his departure? What a din the French drums made in Puebla's streets! Parties

of drummers seemed to be marching up and down every one of its thoroughfares; and in one of the Plazas there was an entire French military band, with a big drum, and a side-drum, and an indefinite number of little drums, discoursing martial music, which was actually deafening. The performance of a military band is, however, to me invariably a delight. It is amicable and social: it is humanising, and softening, and civilising. It pleases the children; it mollifies the mob; and, especially, it brings out the pretty girls. They always dress in their best, and look their nicest, to hear the warlike music play. Even the Italian ladies at Milan, in the days of the Austrian occupation of Lombardy, could not resist the evening mazurkas and schottisches. It was only in Venice that they kept away in obstinate sulkiness from the drums and trombones of the *Tedeschi*. Now, here in Puebla, the red-legged warriors of Napoleon the Third were quite as cordially hated as ever had been the white-coated warriors of Francis Joseph in Lombardo-Venetia. The French had bombarded Puebla mercilessly; and the first phases of their occupation subsequent to the surrender had been a very close imitation of a sack. The Poblans had made a fierce attack; the majority of their number were known to be Spanish to the core; already was the expected Maximilian as a dog from the north—the Poblana notions of geography being somewhat hazy. Still they could not resist the French military bands in the Plaza; and in the evening not only were they to be seen there, but Mexican ladies and Mexican dandies in the most elaborate toilettes of the newest Paris fashion.

In this same Plaza—of which, perhaps, the area is as vast as that of Russell-square, London—there were some two thousand quiet and subdued listeners to the invaders' music, of that race which makes up the vast bulk of the Mexican people, the Red Indian; "red," inasmuch as the hue of the Mexican aborigines, as compared with the complexion of the Indians of the more northern portions of the American continent, is as that of a bright copper kettle by the side of a cake of chocolate. They have just a tinge of European blood in them; the late General Almonte had about a tenth; and Don Benito Juarez, the actual President of the Republic, an even smaller admixture of Spanish race: so small indeed that he is sometimes in disparagement termed "*El Indio*." The

Mexican red man may aspire to become a general, a senator, a lawyer, a landed proprietor, a magistrate, a robber—all kinds of grand things, in fine. But as an unadulterated Indian, only one career is open to him, by means of which he may raise himself above the position of a mere hewer of wood and drawer of water. He may enter the church. And although he may no more dream of becoming Archbishop of Guadalupe than the gardener of Lambeth Palace may aspire to become Archbishop of Canterbury, he is suffered to undertake the ill-paid office of a village priest. High offices, rank, wealth, are all for the creole Spaniards and half-castes. With extreme rarity do you find an Indian alcalde in some country place, or occupying the status of a well-to-do "ranchero" or farmer. Now and then he is a "magney" grower on a small scale, but is usually found to pawn his slender possessions in cactus plants to wealthy higglers, who make "pulque" from the "magney" in large quantities. He seldom feels any inclination to turn guerillero or brigand. He robs in a small way, when he can do so without detection; but very few real Indians are among the professed highwayman class—into the army he is found to enter; and a deplorable, weak-minded, spiritless, soldier he makes; not through any lack of courage, but simply through a despairing inability to discuss what the deuce he should fight for. During the French expeditionary campaign, the invaders were terribly harassed by the Mexican light cavalry—dare-devil fellows of mixed blood, and often commanded by Spaniards or European adventurers; but the Mexican infantry, being mainly Indians, were usually scattered like chaff before the wind. It was not that they wouldn't fight; it was that they did not perceive the utility of fighting. Santa Anna or Miramon, Juarez or Maximilian, it was all one to them. If they had been asked to nominate a sovereign, they would probably have declared for Montezuma; but the great cacique has been dead three hundred years and more; and the "Noche Triste," when they strove so hard, and with so near an approach to success, to rid themselves of the European intruders, will return no more. They have made up their minds to take things quietly. The soft, half-whispering tone of voice habitual with them, bespeaks meek and hopeless resignation. The Indians I saw, from the sea coast to a distance of four hundred miles therefrom, were neither tall

nor athletic. Numbers of them were, even, almost dwarfishly diminutive; the females especially. They are labourers, and, to a certain extent skilful. Save when they get tipsy on "pulque," they are peaceful and affable. They are the devoutest of Roman Catholics, as Roman Catholicism is understood in Mexico. They are farm-labourers or "peons," grooms, horse-couplers, blacksmiths, mechanics, porters, water-carriers, and especially florists. One of the prettiest sights in Mexico city is to see the Indian canoes come up the canal which skirts the promenade known as El Paseo de la Vega, crammed from stem to stern with the loveliest flowers. The bird-like Aztec physiognomy, so familiar in ancient Mexican sculptures and pictures, is exceedingly common among the modern Mexican Indians, and in their apparel they have nothing of the savage. They go simply clad in striped blankets: the men in loose drawers of white calico or "manta:" the women in dark-coloured skirts of cotton stuff. Both sexes wear hats of palm fibre, or coarse maize straw. As a whole, the Mexican Indians reckon for nothing, and are as nothing, in the political scheme of the country.

Rataplan, plan, plan, rataplan, plan, plan, pla-a-a-n! Confound those drums! To avoid the parchment thunder I fled down a narrow "calle," which, from its narrowness and its skirting of melancholy stone walls, broken only here and there by a dark doorway or a barred window, seemed to offer some prospects of peace and quietness.

I had not advanced many paces, however, before more music was audible. But it was not a drum. It was a guitar, villanously out of tune, and seemingly lacking at least two strings, but twanged with a certain amount of dexterity. And to this accompaniment came a song in which three voices were audible—one a gruff bass, the other a terribly shrill tenor, both of men, of course; the third a woman's voice, somewhat strident, but not wholly displeasing.

It was an old camp and barrack song the trio were singing: a song you may have heard among the tents at Chalons or Boulogne, somewhat in this wise:

La vivandière fait d'la bonne soupe;
Elle est l'amie des enfants de troupe;
Dans la paix comme à la guerre,
On a besoin de la vivandière:
Blaguons la, blaguons la,
Et quequ' fois, embrassons la.
(Bis.)

It was the vivandière herself who was playing the guitar, and joining merrily in the chant in her own praise. I looked into the little courtyard, where she and the drum-major and the senior clarionet were sitting at a table, with a bottle and glasses between them. "Will monsieur give himself the pains to be seated?" quoth the vivandière; and she fell to twanging the guitar more merrily than ever.

AN APOLOGY FOR VERSE.

As we have allowed the Vindicator of Prose* to advocate freely the cause of his client, it is but fair that the apologist for Verse should have an equal opportunity for justifying his preference. As prose identifies itself with history, so verse readily associates itself with poetry. The vindicator properly concedes the priority of the latter, and dates its origin and existence in some pre-historic age, which was eminently the age of poetry. Nations appear to have passed a long poetic life, before arriving at the condition of becoming states, or even societies. Tradition reaches beyond the registry of the founding of either, and intimates that even then many changes had already happened. Language itself gives abundant proof of what no literature has narrated; for philology affords plentiful evidence that the nations of antiquity had proceeded from Asia as a centre, and more than assumes an extensive range of events which have had no historian, though dimly shadowed forth in Norse and Caledonian legends, which were originally said or sung, not written. Empires lie concealed beneath the ground which once shone so gloriously in the sunlight, such as that of the solitary Nile, whose speechless dead are now dug up and transported to all quarters of the globe, and whose majestic habitations stimulate the fancy to suggestions of departed greatness; like splendid but empty tombs that serve as cenotaphs, in remembrance of those who once were rich and brave and fair, but whose very ashes have long since been distributed among surviving nations.

There is no reason to suppose that the records of ante-historical or poetic periods have been lost, or accidentally perished; they are wanting, simply because their existence was impossible. The requisite subjects which render annals desirable had not yet been revealed, though no doubt there was plenty of incident, many revolutions, nomadic wanderings, and the strangest mutations, which, though they give occasion to poetry, have no historic value, because not being yet related to law they may boast of no distinctness as transactions, and no clearness as objects of human consciousness. Indian literature abounds in illustration of this, by which we are made acquainted with a land rich in intellectual products, and those of the

profoundest order of thought, but without any history. Instead of this, India presents us with ancient books relating to religion, splendid poems, and early codes, which, under certain conditions, might have served as the material for history, but under those that actually existed were never employed for any such purpose. A German writer accounts for this by the impulse of organisation, which, in beginning to develop social distinctions, was in that country immediately petrified in the classification according to castes. The subjective, or spiritual, element, was not yet developed, and in its absence the laws concerning civil rights were made dependent on exclusive natural distinctions. They were especially occupied with determining the relations (Wrongs rather than Rights) of the various classes towards each other, and especially the privileges of the higher over the lower.

Under such conditions, imagination, to supply a great social want, generated what we have called poetry, which supplied in the ideal what was absent from the actual. In this, and the need for this, lies the required apology for the origin of poetry, which filled a void that, while it remained unoccupied, was doomed to waste and desolation. Here was room for its creations, and for the exercise of its fancies. And now the wilderness began to blossom as the rose. A new pleasure had been invented; also a new pain. For Byron was correct when he wrote that "Pain and Pleasure are two names for one feeling." A state of consciousness was awakened that till then had slumbered; the instrument and agent of such awakening being the feeling of pain. Such pain even becomes an element of worship, for in it the sorrowful worshipper, according to the learned dictum of a great modern sage, realises, in a certain antagonism, his own subjectivity; at once indulging self-consciousness and recognising the presence of actual existence. Two principles are blended in one, and a unity produced in which light and darkness, life and death, are reconciled.

It was in this way that poetry was, in the earliest times, found assisting in the worship of Adonis; the best of worship, namely, that of grief. It is in the celebration of the death of Adonis, we are told by the authority just referred to, and of his resurrection, that the concrete is made conscious. For poetry only improves, not invents. The story of Adonis is that of a youth who is torn from his parents by a too early death, an accident regarded by the ancients as exceptional. To them it bore a miraculous sort of character, and was thus elevated into a spiritual, even a divine event. The death of parents is natural—a debt to be duly and unreluctantly paid. "But when a youth," says the critical interpreter of the myth, "is snatched away by death, the occurrence is regarded as contrary to the proper order of things. While affliction at the death of parents is no just affliction, in the case of youth death is a paradox. And this is the deeper element in the conception—that in the divinity supposed, negativity, antithesis, is

manifested; and that the worship rendered to him involves both elements—the pain felt for the divinity snatched away, and the joy occasioned by his being found again.”

In this beautiful myth, after all, poetry has, perhaps, but sublimated the phenomenal, and transformed the simply natural into the divine. The culture, however spiritual in its results, differed nothing from the method by which the political idea related itself to social conditions. Adonis was probably the sun. The festival in his honour resembled the worship of Osiris: a funeral festival, at which the women broke out into extravagant lamentations over the departed deity. These lamentations were embodied in a song which Herodotus called *Maneros*, after the only son of the first king of the Egyptians, who died prematurely. It is the only song the Egyptians have, and the same as the *Linus* song of the Greeks. In this the divinity of pain is recognised. Three leading ideas are recognisable in the poetic embodiment and the devout ceremonial. Osiris, the sun, the Nile, are all employed as symbols, and referred to the same primitive unity. And thus the imagination, in initiating a religion of sorrow, uttered its complaints in lyric verse, in which the moral nature of man and the physical structure of the universe combined with each other in forming a mythology, the two-fold elements of which refer us to the opposite principles in which it originated, and render it equally capable of an ideal and a sensuous interpretation.

Fanciful as these creations were, they might have changed daily, but for the invention of verse, which, by means of a metrical arrangement and a peculiar diction, fixed in a permanent form the verbal expression of poetical ideas, together with their rhythmical flow, and thus enabled the memory to preserve them as precious utterances of truth. Before the art of writing existed, such an aid to memory was specially welcome, and the golden verses thus enunciated were repeatedly sung by their hearers, and transmitted to others, even of a distant day and generation. It also became an art to invent symbolic poems, in which the natural and the spiritual should mutually illustrate each other, not by way of allegory, but as twin portions of an original whole, both of which were supposed, though erroneously, to be equally knowable to the wise. The poet and the philosopher were the same, and continued to be so long after poetry was written; nor could the introduction of prose avail to separate them, until comparatively modern times, when the distinction was seen to be convenient to prevent the confusion which had so long identified the fields of fancy and fact. Even history was, at first, written in verse, and imagination permitted to dominate in its statements; and it remains to this day difficult for the student to distinguish between actual occurrences and the fables substituted for them in the earliest records of the race, in which poetry and religion are almost inextricably identified. Many arts, indeed,

were then represented by the same individual, who was at once theologian, physiologist, speculative and practical philosopher, statesman, lawgiver, poet, orator, or musician. And while the doctrines and precepts connected with these were delivered orally, and until they were collected and recorded, the form of verse preserved them in the memory of the hearers, who were thus enabled to repeat them to their children, and at their public festivals and ceremonial observances, for the diversion and instruction of the whole community.

Even at a later period, the Greeks had no other term than *music* for naming that part of their system of education which had express reference to the cultivation of mind; which term is therefore employed by their writers, both historians and philosophers, in a most comprehensive sense. The fact, indeed, that the term music was thus used in such a large and inclusive manner, and was united with poetry, rehearsals, and imitative gestures, has helped the general student to appreciate more justly the “musical contests” of the Greeks, which exerted the greatest influence on the people, being connected with the four most solemn of the national games, the Olympian, Pythian, Isthmian, and Nemean, and also, at Athens, with the Panathenæan festival. This last was one of the highest interest, and attended by vast multitudes. By the appointment of Pericles, the contests were held in the Odeum, an edifice specially appropriated for the purpose. The competitors in these contests were required to possess natural abilities, long and laborious preparation, theoretical and practical knowledge of their art, a well-modulated voice, and skill upon the musical instruments which accompanied the exercise, usually the lyre or harp. Verse and music were wedded on these occasions, as the ministers of beauty, and were assisted by the eloquence of such men as Isocrates, who recited his famous panegyric at one of these festivals. Dramatic exhibitions were also given, the dialogue pertaining to which was always written in verse. Both verse and prose had due honour on these occasions; nor should it be forgotten that the writers in both were in Greece accustomed to make their works known by recitation or rehearsal. They read or rehearsed by themselves, or by proxy, sometimes procuring it to be done by others, in order to avail themselves of the opinion of hearers and judges; and this they did both publicly and privately. The practice has been partly revived in our days, and more than one author has recently appeared on the platform to read in public his effusions. It had its origin in an early Greek custom, mentioned by Homer; according to which, lyric songs and epic rhapsodies were sung by the poets themselves, or by other singers, who, as well as the poets, played upon musical instruments.

There is the same motive and occasion for verse in modern as in ancient times. It is the appropriate expression of delicate and refined ideas and sentiments, which will scarcely bear the comparatively rough handling of robust

prose. Southey has justly observed on this point, that, "although it is in verse that the most consummate skill in composition is to be looked for, and all the artifice of language displayed, yet it is in verse only that we throw off the yoke of the world, and are as it were privileged to utter our deepest and holiest feelings." What multitudes in this day benefit by this privilege! Hence the number of metrical volumes which have no other value than that of personal note-books, and, are probably read only by their writers, or glanced at only by their reviewers to be ridiculed. There is some cruelty in this, though the treatment is natural, for by worldly men the feelings themselves which such verses register are generally received with derision. Yet, as Southey again remarks, in respect to such feelings, "poetry may be called the salt of the earth; for we express in it, and receive in it sentiments for which, were it not in this permitted medium, the usages of the world would neither allow utterance nor acceptance." Verse, then, even in these days when prose is in the ascendant, has its vocation; and its use is of a beneficent character, good in its primary exercise, and good in the influence which it exerts on others, in the first place on the friends and acquaintance of the metrical amateur, and in the next, perhaps, on the world beyond. None, indeed, can tell, as Southey has asserted, how much more selfish, how much worse we should have been in all moral and intellectual respects, had it not been for the unnoticed and unsuspected influence of this preservative. Much even, he says, of that poetry, which is in its composition worthless, or absolutely bad, contributes to this good. Surely, this consideration alone is a sufficient Apology for Verse.

TOM BUTLER.

A BOY'S HERO. IN SIX CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER III. UNCLE JACK.

ABOUT three years later, when I am out on some foray through the streets, a large hand claps me on the back, and a larger voice sings out cheerily, "Halloa, my boy, this you!" For the moment, I could not recollect; but having only a limited round of acquaintances, memory in a second laid its finger upon the noble, chivalrous, valiant, and gallant Tom. Not much changed in his face, though his nose had grown more aquiline, but a great deal in his clothes. He was arrayed in a superb blue frock coat, with gold down the front, a crimson sash, and golden oyster shells on his shoulders; in fact, he was an officer, and this he called his undress. "Well, who'd have thought it?" he said; "and how have you been? Do you remember the licking I gave the Frenchman? Now we can go at them in the regular way, and no one can stop us.

Come, where are you going?" We walked, and he told me all his adventures. I think now what a *really* good-natured and quite a chivalrous fellow he was, and how few of his cloth would be inclined to "be bothered" with a boy. He told me how the "poor governor had gone under at last, and was buried in the English burying-ground. He never liked me; and the poor old duffer was shamed into getting me *this*. It only cost him a letter, but faith it costs me a deal. That don't matter, so long as it lasts."

The renewing of this acquaintance brought some delightful days. He graciously said he would make a point of coming to see "my people," who received him with distinction, though he did not know how often I had been warned against his company. His ready off-hand manner, his loud laugh, his stories, his honest good humour, at once established him as a favourite. He came to dine very often; he had influence with the head of the house, and could make her do what he pleased—in reference to *me*. But poor Simpson, our governess, he, so to speak, floored. Her he could, indeed, persuade to do what he pleased. Her heart, never before invaded by the sweet seduction of the gentle passion, and which, at most, had but a severe and intellectual communion with Lindley Murray and Mr. Mangnall, was now literally *burst into* by the gallant Tom. He was very good-natured to her. He was so amusing. He used to sing, too, in a rude way; but like such inharmonious songsters was passionately fond of the art. He was always interposing between me and retribution or ruin. As this pleasant friendship was renewed, an event occurred which seemed to me to combine extraordinary dramatic significance; and the circumstances were these:

One morning there was an astonishing commotion. Up on the Mont Blanc of our house we heard betimes strange sounds and scuffings towards the Grand Mulets below. Scouts at the window, half dressed scouts, too, hanging out, reported with delight, "That there was a horse walking up and down." This was always an incident of surprise and speculation, much as would be the entry of such an object on the stage. There were presently agitated descendings and rustlings. Miss Simpson abandoned her sentry-box and musket, our vigilant maid did the same, and the whole barrack, with a true and amazing instinct, that anticipated logic or information, inferred that something of vast importance had taken

place, and that we might give ourselves over to universal riot and breakage—which we did accordingly.

The morning went on, and we heard nothing. First, because no one felt bound to offer us the courtesy of an explanation, and naturally enough thought we had no need of it; and, secondly, because so long as we were assured of liberty and relaxed discipline, we were not inclined to be too nice on the point. I am bound to say, it was to the bursting importance of a superior intelligence that we at last owed the news. For Miss Simpson, restless and swelling with importance, could not long restrain herself, and imparted the cause of the commotion. The man on the horse, who had long since ridden away, was an "express" from the country.

"Come here, Jane, come here. You, sir, come here, and be serious for a moment. Let that chair alone. I declare if he hasn't cracked the leg——" Thus grouped we listened.

A dreadful and unexpected business had taken place. It was slowly and impressively broken to us. Miss Simpson began: "Death was a dreadful and an awful thing. We must all submit to it, the highest as well as the lowest—there was no escape. Even Lady Jane Mortimer opposite, who drove the lovely greys." Adopting the more immediate illustration, entirely to the prejudice of what it was meant to illustrate, I instinctively turned to look out of the window, and see the spectacle alluded to, which for me had an exquisite charm. On this I was dragged rudely round, and told, as usual, that I would end disgracefully. But the point of the whole was this: our dear great uncle, of whom we had often heard our good mamma speak, one of the best of men (my eyes were widening with wonder, who *could* it be?), the kind friend who was so thoughtful, who used to send up the hampers at Christmas (*now* I knew), had gone, had left this weary world, and we would never, never see him again!—a prospect, considering that I had never yet seen him, which did not affect *me* much. But I had logic enough to see that his departure would materially affect the recurring hampers.

But we little anticipated the surprises of that most dramatic day. There was advice and consultation with Mr. John; his suggestions were received with docility and respect. I caught those words of his: "*The captain would be home at nine o'clock, please God, and then we'd know.*"

Don't, *don't* worry yourself ma'am, and we'll all come right in time." Then arrived Mr. Bickers, who on occasions of moral crises was as indispensable, and came up the stairs in the same way, as the great family doctor in an illness. He had been sent for, and he came, as it were, professionally. All that day he was on the premises, walking up and down the room, drinking sherry, declaiming, giving advice, generally speaking, as to himself and his advice, not worth a rush. He read out, "A fine passage, ma'am," from Bowdler's sermons, which I was sent for to listen to. "The great leveller, ma'am," he was saying as I entered—"the scythe, the scythe, ma'am! Well, sir, how do you feel now—under the valley of the shadow? Have you come to that chapter in your catechism?"

"Indeed, Mr. Bickers, I am sorry to say he seems very little alive to the awful visitation that has occurred. There is a sort of levity about him that is incomprehensible. But it will break on him at last. How fine the words of the burial service. Ah!"

Here entered my two sisters, who were composed, amiable little hypocrites! to a decent and subdued bearing. There was apparent even such hasty tributes of respect to the deceased, as a black ribbon tied round their waists in an enormous bow. This was of course provisional, en attendant a more organised display of grief which Miss Simpson was at this moment purchasing at a shop.

"Nothing could have been nicer," I heard it whispered to Mr. Bickers, "than the behaviour of those girls. I assure you women of fifty would not have shown more sorrow."

It occurred to me that people at that time of life would have exhibited less; and if I had not been living under penal laws, I should perhaps have ventured on the remark; but at this moment I already saw the artist who had made the famous green frock crossing the street, and coming up our steps with an air of recognition. He had seen me, and pleasantly imitated, in a sort of pantomime, the art of measurement. Mr. Bickers was at that moment sonorously expatiating on "the fine passage" in the burial service, to which the little ladies, so well brought up, were listening, I fear, with only the respect of unintelligence, when the spectacle of the arriving artist seemed to me of such overwhelming importance, and was so dramatic, that I burst

in on the "fine passage in our burial service" with the inopportune remark, made in a rude, enthusiastic, "blurted-out" fashion:

"Oh, I say! here's the tailor. He's coming to measure me!"

Mr. Bickers looked angry and offended. "Take him away!" was the cry. "Go up stairs, sir!" But it was true—quite true. The tailor had been sent for to accommodate me with a suit which would figure in the bill as "an extra double-milled wire-wove superfine black jacket," with everything to match; and the operation was got through with speed. More marvellous still, it was to be sent home in the morning. There were other signs and wonders. My quick eye had noted motion and general operations in the stable, and, stealing out, I found John in the act of what he called "shaming" the green chariot. But he was mysterious about that great family monument, and declined to admit me into confidence. "We'd see to-morrow or next day"—a term which, unknown to him, corresponded to the popular relegation to the Greek kalends—things, of course, of which he had never heard. A more interesting spectacle was his operations with the lamps, into which he was fitting candles. He said this, too, would be explained "to-morrow or next day." It was most singular. Death, it really seemed to me, without irreverence, was a most singular, mysterious, yet not uninteresting thing, since it brought with it such dramatic events, carriage lamps, &c., and, above all, suspension of house discipline. Dinner, even, of which Mr. Bickers was induced to stay and partake, was got over in a spasm, after which he walked up and down, and I well remember, in the absence of the head of the house, got into a discussion with Miss Simpson, who, presuming on the crisis and general *laissez faire* established, had supported an opinion. "Ma'am," I heard him say, distinctly, "*you are a fool!*"—a rudeness to which she replied by rising and leaving the room, saying that "he quite forgot himself, and that no gentleman would address *any* lady in that way." Everybody sat up very late that night.

On the next morning there was greater joy and excitement in the house. John was heard below in the hall saying to some one, "Then, indeed, it's I that am glad to see you, captain! Welcome a thousand times from over the mountains, captain," for with a profusion of *this sort of Eastern*

salutation did he usually love to greet his friends. Down we came stumbling, scrambling; female voices were heard more faintly behind, for "the captain"—Uncle Jack—was infinitely popular in that house. Between me and him especially there was a community and fellowship, born of similar tastes. *He understood me*; every one understood him. He was long and lame, had a hooked "Duke's" nose, and, indeed, he was said to resemble that eminent commander, but with the gentlest, softest blue eyes. His history was said to be curious; the youngest of innumerable younger sons, with a commission begged for him, certainly not purchased, he had been sent out from his native bogs with—he often told it—"a five-pound note in his pocket." Yet from that hour he wanted nothing, and his own father owned sometimes, "he must say that from the day Jack left him he had never written for so much as twenty pounds in all his life." A scarcely fair way of putting it, as implying that application had been made for sums lower in amount by Uncle Jack, who owned to me modestly, that he could never bring himself to trouble them for sixpence. God knows, he said, they had mouths enough to fill. From that hour he never wanted anything, simply because he never wanted friends. Generals clung to him with an almost romantic friendship, and, as these were "jobbing" days, one of them triumphantly carried through a most flagrant job, triumphing in the interest of his friend Jack. He was not forty, but was placed on the retired list in the enjoyment of full pay. He used to relate the stages of that corrupt transaction, half comically, half with a little shame. "To think of my useless four bones costing the country all that, and with all those honest hard-working fellows struggling to make both ends meet." He had a charming little villa and farm combined, far down in the country, which bore the name of Lota, and where it was known that Uncle Jack kept the best horse, and the neatest little carriage, and the best dog, with a good gun, and a good bottle of wine, and a jar of whisky "that was worth drinking." Indeed, these things came to him without trouble, of course allowing for his own nice judgment in such matters, having the "best eye for a horse in the whole country." As may be conceived, his gentle nature was turned to profit by numerous reduced relations who had started far more auspiciously in the world, and who now con-

sidered "Jack" as one who had had unfair advantages. Many was the ten-pound note that went off to these applicants, to say nothing of a little annuity here and there. By gentlemen of his family the honour of Uncle Jack's name to their bills was eagerly sought; but on this point he was inflexible. Here, too, they considered they were scurvily treated, and loudly inveighed against Jack's selfishness, he who had such advantages, being "pushed on" in every way; and they grudgingly accepted the twenty pounds or so, which was humbly offered as a solatium. Such a loan was, of course, but a handsome synonym for gift.

It was always gala time for us when Uncle Jack arrived from the country, and put up at our hostelry. Between him and me there was the most perfect accord, chiefly as to mechanical taste—repairs, sharpenings, &c. He knew the most acceptable present he could offer me was a penknife, which he usually chose of beautiful workmanship, and, knowing beforehand that it would be seized by the officers of justice and confiscated, he, with rare delicacy, stipulated with the authorities that I should be allowed to retain it. I am sorry to say this engagement was only held to during his presence, as some fatal wilfulness was sure to precipitate me into an unmeaning overt act, such as cutting open a "darby" to look at his springs, or in gashing my thumb frightfully. Imbrued in my own blood, I was seized and never saw the instrument again.

CHAPTER IV. AN EXPEDITION.

THE present occasion was too serious for these delassements. An agitated council was held almost in the hall, and I heard the question put, "Well, can you go?"

"To be sure, my dear," was the answer.

"Then that's all right. And the chariot is ready, and John, and——"

"O, tut, nonsense!" protested Uncle Jack. "Indeed, no. To be battering your beautiful carriage all down the country roads. No. I'll just get a chaise comfortably from Baker's."

He shrank from the profanity of laying hands on the sacred vehicle, which he revered as though it had newly come from Hooper's. But such protest was unavailing. That good fellow, Tom Butler, had at once volunteered to go down, and represented affecting even a kind of interest in the deceased, having met him, he said, *some-where at dinner*. This kindness was so like

Tom, and was really delicacy on his side, for he knew that in these mortuary arrangements, a handsome show and an air of crowd and pomp, while it soothes the poignancy of grief, at the same time ministers to the pride of the living. Mr. John was presently taken into council, as if he was an "elder," and seemed to speak with great collectedness, gravity, and weight, with many a "So best," "So be it," and was listened to with respect. The past was utterly forgotten, and the captain, who respected him highly, said he must own that John had made the coach "look better than the first day. You could see yourself in it." Mr. John took this compliment modestly, and "must say that, as far as 'shaming' went, and polishing, he had spared neither wind, limb, or bone." I almost think he was going to add something about being "heart-scalded;" but, in delicacy to the situation, he refrained. After we were led away up to bed, a new surprise was in store for us. We were just going to sleep, when a deputation seemed to fill the room, dazzling lights to multiply, and a crowd to enter. The crowd was only the head of our house and the captain.

"There's news for you, my boy," he said. "Mamma has given leave, and you can go in the back seat. Will you be ready at seven sharp?"

"Miss Simpson will get him up, and his new clothes have come back."

"That's a good lad," said the captain.

"And I'll bet my new hat it's a fine account I'll bring back of him. You won't mind sitting behind with John in the dickey, for a time, that is; but we'll have you in now and again, my boy, on the folding-up seat."

Mind the dickey behind! Why, it was the very spot I would have chosen—the paradise of the vehicle—with the sunny day, the quick motion, above all, that translation into a genuine actual reality, instead of the meagre coach-house pantomime of clambering into a merely stationary back seat—poor enough entertainment. Now, if I was so minded, I could rehearse, with real danger, that performance of mounting and scaling the seat hastily.

It was hard to sleep that night, but it was contrived somehow. Betimes I was awake, and saw with exquisite delight the new extra superfine black suit lying neatly folded beside me. There was, besides, a hat, about the size of a little flower-pot, an article without which it was impossible to have the true air of mourning. I had never had one on my head before, save, of course, in the way of sportive experiment. Once,

too, I had furtively tried on one of the Goodmans' hats which was lying in the hall.

Every one was down. The captain was exquisitely shaved, even at that early hour, as by machinery. The brave and noble Tom Butler came rattling up in a cab, just in time for the really sumptuous meal that was set out. I was encouraged to partake largely of the delicious broiled ham and mutton chops, and, more succulent still, the richly buttered muffins, which strewed the board in profusion. Surely the only moral I tried to draw was that mourning, and the stroke that brings mourning, must be a more agreeable thing than it was generally depicted, and that those well-meaning clergymen whom I had heard from the pulpit asking death where its sting was, and the grave where its victory, might well pause for a reply. Victories and stings, indeed! The embodied muffins and fried ham were not to be spoken of thus unfairly. We were all in good spirits, too, and even gay, the captain making a passing allusion to "poor old Ned's wake," and the hearty Tom rallying Miss Simpson pleasantly. At last we were ready. There was a sound of wheels, and soon the green chariot came clattering up to the window, shaking and bobbing on its C springs. The postilion had quite a festive air, as if he was about to take in a wedding party. Heads came to the other windows in our modest street, for John had taken care to let the news get wind, and this pageant and journey implied a sort of magnificence both for the deceased and those who mourned him. Finally we emerged, the whole family on the steps and about the hall, the captain, in his dark, scarcely black suit, I alone glistening like a little snake, while Tom, who had good-naturedly made an attempt to join in harmony with his afflicted companions, did not get beyond mere neutral tints. John, who had banged down the steps with needless violence—a recollection of his old lacquey days—stood holding the door open in *genuine* though slightly rusty saffers. To say the truth, these mournful occasions were highly to his taste, and he always requested permission to attend when he thought there was the least excuse for paying that last mark of respect. He never lacked a seat, and there were, besides, the inducements of the dismal decorations, scarf and hatband, which ornaments, unbecoming to a degree, he wore with a pride and complacency the most splendid livery could not have extorted.

The captain and the brave Tom Butler were both seated inside. I was already in the "dickey," yet having, alas! unluckily "blocked" the new hat against the C spring! It crushed in fearfully, with a half crackle, half rustle. The misfortune was seen by Miss Simpson only, but she was generous, out of decency, I supposed, to the occasion; otherwise I expected to have been dragged down and brought up summarily before the justices. Then the whip cracked, and we were off.

Delightful day! We were posting it, and were to go about sixty miles. For me it was a new sensation—the freedom, the keen air, the motion, the commanding elevation, even the jolting! Above all, I began to be gifted with an amazing fluency and volubility, and invited John to unfold to me experiences of his amazing life, which seemed to me worthy to be placed beside some of the adventurous voyagers whose stories I had read with such interest. But with an almost dramatic relevancy, he confined himself to details that sprang, as it were, from our present attitude. There was a posting journey from London to Cheltenham, "on the loveliest road," and on which he had met the famous Colonel Berkeley, himself driving four-in-hand, "and the two grooms sitting up behind with their arms crossed—the loveliest brown and gold liveries on them, and a lady, the creature! alongside of him." Then we got out in the fine smooth country roads—strips of grey and yellow winding out like a ribbon of a rich green silk dress; then a hill rose up before us like a ladder, and we had to get out and walk, and the glass was let down and a cloud of smoke came out—the captain and the brave Tom Butler smoking together. They talked to me cheerfully, and when we got to the top of the hill there was a halt, while, mysterious operation! we all assisted in *putting on the drag*. I loved the grinding sound as we scraped down the hill. The postilion had an interest for me, owing to the strange mechanism of his inner boot—a protection against the pole. We passed little villages, all scraps of white in a very green ground. Then came a snowy "'pike," where I should like to have lived and taken the money, and in about two hours drew up handsomely at an inn called The Plough, where we were to change horses. Ostlers came out, and retired with our horses, grown very lanky of a sudden. I heard our late postilion wishing "long life" to the captain—I had no doubt a sincere wish—for the captain's manner of

bestowing a half-crown made it five shillings, and there was a supplemental wish that he might drive at the captain's wedding. Then we rattled off with a plunge, Mr. John being savage, for I had called all right from behind, and he had to run hard, and with difficulty got up.

At the next stage all the voyagers descended at "McCallum's," where the captain recollected stopping fifteen years ago, and where there was actually some one that recollected him, or seemed to recollect him. But, in truth, there was in the captain's face always such a gracious, kindly recognition of his fellow-creatures who were below him in station, that it seemed the renewal, as it were, of quite an old acquaintance. So when he had greeted Mrs. McCallum warmly and gallantly, also telling her she was as dangerous as she was twenty years ago, that smart lady fair recollected the visit and the compliments paid to her.

We were to lunch here. I remember to this hour the peculiar fragrance of the inn parlour, the air half of beer, half the flavour of sawdust, and yet not disagreeable. *Such ale—such a round of beef—such cheese!* But in those days everything had "such" before it, from the want of a frequent standard of comparison. "Cut and come again," said the captain, who took good care that Mr. John should be carefully attended to—possibly a superfluous precaution. The brave Tom was in boisterous spirits, making jokes, and eating prodigiously. What I admired in both gentlemen was their amazing command of easy conversation, and the pleasant rallying they kept up with Mrs. McCallum—the imagination, the ready wit, so it seemed to me. Nor was she behindhand, and, I dare swear, talked long after of the green chariot and the two pleasant gentlemen it brought. I was greatly delighted with the series of paintings, as they appeared to me, that hung out from the walls in a beetling manner, as if they were going to fall down on our heads. They were of an absorbing dramatic interest, representing passages in the life of a huntsman—a vast and confused crowd of red coats, and a number of very high stocks and painted "gills." The captain recognised them at once. "Ay, Tom Moody—poor Tom Moody—I have them all down at Lota. See, there he is going over

the ha-ha, and *there* they're all like ourselves, bound for a funeral. We haven't as long faces as they have, quite; eh, Tom, my boy? See here. Look at this horse, with his whip and his spurs. Immensely well done."

Now we were on again, with fresh horses, and Mrs. McCallum stands curtsying and smiling at the door, and I am convinced she feels the loss of the captain very much. I recollect now the captain rallying brave Tom, on something that occurred in the passage. "When my back was turned too," said the captain—"a shame! taking advantage of an elderly veteran." I did not know then what this joking was referring to; but I think I can make a guess now. I was taken inside and seated on a little seat contrived to let up and down, and never was so entertained, contributing myself no inconsiderable share of the conversation, and being invited to do so. Then I was asked to sing, and greatly pressed by the captain, who said, "Mark his words; but I would astonish them yet with an uncommon fine organ of my own!" I gave them my *cheval de bataille*—the *Pilgrim of Love*, Mr. Incledon's, I believe, favourite ditty, which I had found in an old red music book between *The Battle of Prague* and a song called *The Rosy Beam of Morning*. I am not a little amused to see that this old favourite has since come seriously into fashion, voiced by welkin-splitting tenors. The captain's own gifts were of a modest sort, confined chiefly to a gentle accompaniment of "Tum, ti, tum, de, dee, ti, tum, tum, toy." Yet he could play on a violin, and often delighted us by an account of doings at "Mrs. Dodd's boarding house—a tip-top place," where he lived "with the best," about the time quadrilles came over from France, and where the passion for the dance was so strong that the ladies and gentlemen would begin at once after luncheon, closing "Dodd's" shutters, and lighting up the rooms, while Uncle Jack, good-natured always, would sit at the head, and fiddle "Payne's Quadrille" over and over again. But I am digressing.

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A SERIAL STORY BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP."

BOOK III.

CHAPTER VII. THE SHATTERING OF THE IDOL.

THE fact that his nieces had actually left the shelter of his roof, although, as he had hitherto believed, that result had been brought about by their own wilfulness and impatience of control, came upon Mr. Creswell with almost stunning force. True, Marian had mentioned to him that it was impossible that she and the girls could ever live together in amity—true, that he himself had on more than one occasion been witness of painful scenes between them—true, that the girls' departure had been talked of for a week past as an expected event, and that the preparations for it lay before his eyes; but he had not realised the fact; his mind was so taken up with the excitement of the coming election contest, that he had scarcely noticed the luggage through which he had occasionally to thread his way, or, if he had noticed it, had regarded its presence there as merely a piece of self-assertion on the part of impetuous Maud or silly Gertrude, determined to show, foolish children as they were, that they were not to be put down by Marian's threats, but were ready to start independently whenever such a step might become necessary. That Marian would ever allow them to take this step, Mr. Creswell never imagined; he thought there had always been smouldering embers of warfare, needing but a touch to burst into a blaze, between his wife and his nieces; he knew that they had never "hit it," as he phrased it; but his opinion of Marian was so high, and his trust in her so great, that he could not believe she

would be sufficiently affected by these "women's tiffs" as to visit them with such disproportionate punishment. Even in the moment of adieu, when Gertrude, making no attempt to hide her tears, had sobbingly kissed him and clung about his neck, and Maud, less demonstrative, but not less affectionate, had prayed God bless him in a broken voice—she passed Mrs. Creswell with a grave bow, taking no notice of Marian's extended hand—the old man could scarcely comprehend what was taking place, but looked across to his wife, hoping she would relent, and with a few affectionate words wish the girls a pleasant visit to London, but bid them come back soon to their home.

But Marian never moved a muscle, standing there, calm and statuesque, until the door had closed upon them and the carriage had rolled away; and then the first sound that issued from her lips was a sigh of relief that, so far, her determination had been fulfilled without much overt opposition, and without any "scene." Not that she was by any means satisfied with what she had done; she had accomplished so much of her purpose as consisted in removing the girls from their uncle's home, but instead of their being reduced in social position thereby—which, judging other people, as she always did, by her own standard, she imagined would be the greatest evil she could inflict upon them—she found her plans had been attended with an exactly opposite result. The entrance into society, which she had so long coveted, and which she had hoped to gain by her husband's election, not merely now seemed dim and remote, owing to the strong possibility of Mr. Creswell's failure, but would now be open to Maud and Gertrude, through the introduction of this lady

Caroline Mansergh, of whose high standing, even amongst her equals, Marian had heard frequently from Mr. Gould, her one link with the great world. This was a bitter blow; but it was even worse to think that this introduction had been obtained for the girls through the medium of Walter Joyce—the man she had despised and rejected on account of his poverty and social insignificance, and who now not merely enjoyed himself, but had apparently the power of dispensing to others, benefits for which she sighed in vain. Now, for the first time, she began to appreciate the estimation in which Walter was held by those whose esteem was worth having. Hitherto she had only thought that the talent for “writing” which he had unexpectedly developed had made him useful to a political party, who, availing themselves of his services in a time of need, gave him the chance of establishing himself in life; but so far as position was concerned, he seemed to have already had, and already to have availed himself of, that chance; for here was the sister of an earl, a woman of rank and acknowledged position, eager to show her delight in doing him service! “And that position,” said Marian to herself, “I might have shared with him! Marriage with me would not have sapped his brain or lessened any of those wonderful qualities which have won him such renown. To such a man a career is always open, and a career means not merely sufficient wealth, but distinction and fame. And I rejected him—for what?”

These reflections and others of similar import formed a constant subject for Marian's mental exertion, and invariably left her a prey to discontent and something very like remorse. The glamour of money-possession had faded away; she had grown accustomed to all it had brought her, and was keenly alive to what it had not brought her, and what she had expected of it—pleasant society, agreeable friends, elevated position. In her own heart she felt herself undervaluing the power of great riches, and thinking how much better was it to have a modest competence sufficient for one's wants, sufficient to keep one from exposure to the shifts and pinches of such poverty as she had known in her early life, when combined with a position in life which gave one the chance of holding one's own amongst agreeable people, rather than to be the Croesus gaped at by wondering yokels, or capped to by favour-seeking tenants. A few months before, such thoughts would have been esteemed almost

blasphemous by Marian; but she held them now, and felt half inclined to resent on her husband his ignorant and passive share in the arrangement which had substituted him for Walter Joyce.

That was the worst of all. After Mand and Gertrude Creswell left Woolgreaves, an unseen but constantly present inmate was added to the household, who sat between husband and wife, and whispered into their ears alternately. His name was Doubt, and to Mr. Creswell he said—“What has become of all those fine resolutions which you made on your brother Tom's death?—resolutions about taking his children under your roof, and never losing sight of them until they left as happy brides? Where are they now? Those resolutions have been broken, have they not? The girls, Tom's daughters— orphan daughters, mind—have been sent away from what you had taught them to look upon as their home—sent away on some trivial excuse of temper—and where are they now? You don't know!—you, the uncle, the self-constituted guardian—positively don't know where they are! You have had her address given you, of course, but you cannot imagine the place, for you have never seen it; you cannot picture to yourself the lady with whom they are said to be staying, for you never saw her, and, until your wife explained who she was, you had scarcely even heard of her. Your wife! Ah! that is a pleasant subject! You've found her all that you expected, have you not? So clever, clear-headed, bright, and, withal, so docile and obedient? Yet she it was who quarrelled with your nieces, and told you that either she or they must leave your house. She it was who saw them depart with delight, and who never bated one jot of her satisfaction when she noticed, as she cannot have failed to notice, your emotion and regret. Look back into the past, man—think of the woman who was your trusted helpmate in the old days of your poverty and struggle!—think of her big heart, her indomitable courage, her loving womanly nature, beaming ever more brightly when the dark shadows gathered round your lives!—think of her, man, compare her with this one, and see the difference!”

And to Marian the dim personage said—“You, a young woman, handsome, clever, and with a lover who worshipped you, have bartered yourself away to that old man sitting there—for what? A fine house, which no one comes to see—carriages, in which you ride to a dull country town to receive

the bows of a dozen shopkeepers, and drive home again—hawbuck servants, who talk against you as they talk against every one, but always more maliciously against any one whom they have known in a different degree of life—and the title of the squire's lady! You are calculated to enjoy life which you will never behold, and to shine in society to which you will never be admitted. You wanted money, and now you have it, and how much good has it done you? Would it not have been better to have waited a little, just a little, not to have been quite so eager to throw away the worshipping lover, who has done so well, as it has turned out, and who is in every way but ill replaced by the old gentleman sitting there?"

The promptings of the dim presence worked uncomfortably on both the occupants of Woolgreaves, but they had the greatest effect on the old gentleman sitting there. With the departure of the girls, and the impossibility which attended his efforts to soften his wife's coldness and do away with the vindictive feeling which she entertained towards his nieces, Mr. Creswell seemed to enter on a new and totally different sphere of existence. The bright earnest man of business became doddering and vagfie, his cheery look was supplanted by a worn, haggard, fixed regard; his step, which had been remarkably elastic and vigorous for a man of his years, became feeble and slow, and he constantly sat with his hand tightly pressed on his side, as though to endeavour to ease some gnawing pain. A certain amount of coldness and estrangement between him and Marian, which ensued immediately after his nieces' departure, had increased so much as entirely to change the ordinary current of their lives; the pleasant talk which he used to originate, and which she would pursue with such brightness and earnestness as to cause him the greatest delight, had dwindled down into a few careless inquiries on her part, and meaningless replies from him; and the evenings, which he had looked forward to with such pleasure, were now passed in almost unbroken silence.

One day Mr. Gould, the election agent, arrived from London at Brocksopp, and, without going into the town, ordered the fly which he engaged at the station to drive him straight to Woolgreaves. On his arrival there he asked for Mrs. Creswell. The servant, who recognised him, and knew his business—what servant at houses which we are in the habit of frequenting does not know our business and all about

us, and has his opinion, generally unfavourable, of us and our affairs?—doubted whether he had heard aright, and replied that his master had gone to Brocksopp, and would be found either at the mills or at his committee-rooms. But Mr. Gould renewed his inquiry for Mrs. Creswell, and was conducted by the wondering domestic to that lady's boudoir. The London agent, always sparse of compliments, spoke on this occasion with even more than usual brevity.

"I came to see you to-day, Mrs. Creswell, and not your husband," said he; "as I think you are more likely to comprehend my views, and to offer me some advice."

"Regarding the election, Mr. Gould?"

"Regarding the election, of course. I want to put things in a clear light to you, and, as you're a remarkably clear-headed woman—oh no, I never flatter, I don't get time enough—you'll be able to turn 'em in your mind, and think what's best to be done. I should have made the communication to your husband six months ago, but he's grown nervous and fidgetty lately, and I'd sooner have the advantage of your clear brain."

"You are very good—do you think Mr. Creswell's looking ill?"

"Well—I was going to say you mustn't be frightened, but that's not likely—you're too strong minded, Mrs. Creswell. The fact is, I do see a great difference in the old—I mean Mr. Creswell—during the last few weeks, and not only I, but the people too."

"You mean some of the electors?"

"Yes, some of his own people, good staunch friends! They say they can't get anything out of him now, can't pin him to a question. He used to be clear and straightforward, and now he wanders away into something else, and sits mumchance and doesn't answer any questions at all."

"And you have come to consult me about this?"

"I've come to say to you that this won't do at all. He is pledged to go to the poll, and he must go, cheerily and pleasantly, though there is no doubt about it that we shall get an awful thrashing."

"You think so?"

"I'm sure so. We were doing very well at first, and Mr. Creswell is very much respected and all that, and he would have beat that young What's-his-name—Bokenham—without very much trouble. But this Joyce is a horse of a different colour. Directly he started the current seemed to turn. He's a good-looking fellow, and

they like that; and a self-made man, and they like that; and he speaks capitally, tells 'em facts which they can understand, and they like that. He has done capitally from the first, and now they've got up some story—Harrington did that, I fancy, young Harrington acting for Potter and Fyfe, very clever fellow—they've got up some story that Joyce was jilted some time ago by the girl he was engaged to, who threw him over because he was poor, or something of that sort, I can't recollect the details, and that has been a splendid card with the women; they are insisting on their husbands' voting for him, so that altogether we're in a bad way."

"Do you think Mr. Creswell will be defeated, Mr. Gould? You'll tell me honestly, of course!"

"It's impossible to say until the day, quite impossible, my dear Mrs. Creswell; but I'm bound to confess it looks horribly like it. By what I understand from Mr. Croke, who wrote to me the other day, Mr. Creswell has given up attending public meetings, and that kind of thing, and that's foolish, very foolish!"

"His health has been anything but good lately, and——"

"I know, and of course his spirits have been down also! But he must keep them up, and he must go to the poll, even if he's beaten."

"And the chances of that are, you think, strong?"

"Are, I fear, very strong! However, something might yet be done if he were to do a little house-to-house canvassing in his old bright spirits. But in any case, Mrs. Creswell, he must stick to his guns, and we look to you to keep him there!"

"I will do my best," said Marian, and the interview was at an end.

As the door closed behind Mr. Gould, Marian flung herself into an easy chair, and the bitter tears of rage welled up into her eyes. So, it was destined that this man was to cross her path to her detriment for the rest of her life. Oh, what terrible shame and humiliation to think of him winning the victory from them, more especially after her interview with him, and the avowal of her intense desire to be successful in the matter! There could be no doubt about the result. Mr. Gould was understood, she had heard, to be in general inclined to take a hopeful view of affairs; but his verdict on the probable issue of the Brocksopp election was unmistakably *dolorous*. What a bitter draught to swallow,

what frightful mortification to undergo! What could be done? It would be impolitic to tell Mr. Creswell of his agent's fears, and even if he were told of them, he was just the man who would more than ever insist on fighting until the very last, and would not imagine that there was any disgrace in being beaten after gallant combat by an honourable antagonist. And there was no possible way out of it, unless—Great Heaven, what a horrible thought!—unless he were to die. That would settle it; there would be no defeat for him then, and she would be left free, rich, and with the power to—— She must not think of anything so dreadful. The noise of wheels on the gravel, the carriage at the door, and her husband descending. How wearily he drags his limbs down the steps, what lassitude there is in every action, and how wan his cheeks are! He is going towards the drawing-room on the ground-floor, and she hastens to meet him there.

"What is the matter? Are you ill?"

"Very—very ill! but pleased to see you, to get back home!" This with a touch of the old manner, and in the old voice. "Very ill, Marian, weak, and down, and depressed. I can't stand it, Marian, I feel I can't."

"What is it that seems too much for you?"

"All this worry and annoyance, this daily contact with all these horrible people! I must give it up, Marian! I must give it up!"

"You must give what up, dear?"

"This election! all the worry of it, the preliminary worry, has been nigh to kill me, and I must have no more of it!"

"Well, but think——"

"I have thought, and I'm determined, that is, if you think so too! I'll give it up, I'll retire, anything to have done with it!"

"But what will people say——?"

"What people, who have a right to say anything?"

"Your committee, I mean—those who have been working for you so earnestly and so long!"

"I don't care what they say! My health is more important than anything else—and you ought to think so, Marian!"

He spoke with a nervous irritability such as she had never previously noticed in him, and looked askance at her from under his grey eyebrows. He began to think that there might be some foundation of truth in Gertrude's out-blurted senti-

ment, that Mrs. Creswell thought of nothing in comparison with her own self-interest. Certainly her conduct now seemed to give colour to the assertion, for Marian seemed annoyed at the idea of his withdrawal from seeking a position by which she would be benefited, even where his health was concerned.

Mr. Creswell was mistaken. Marian, in her inmost heart, had hailed this determination of her husband's with the greatest delight, seeing in it, if it were carried out, an excellent opportunity for escaping the ignominy of a defeat by Walter Joyce. But after this one conversation, which she brought to a close by hinting that of course his wishes should be acted upon, but it would perhaps be better to leave things as they were, and not come to any definite conclusion for the present, she did not allude to the subject, but occupied her whole time in attending to her husband, who needed all her care. Mr. Creswell was indeed very far from well. He went into town occasionally, and, at Marian's earnest request, still busied himself a little about the affairs of the election, but in a very spiritless manner; and when he came home he would go straight to the library, and there, ensconced in an easy chair, sit for hours staring vacantly before him, the shadow of his former self. At times, too, Marian would find his eyes fixed on her, watching all her motions, following her about the room, not with the lingering loving looks of old, but with an odd furtive glance; and there was a pitiful expression about his mouth, too, at those times which was not pleasant to behold. Marian wondered what her husband was thinking of. It was a good thing that she did not know; for as he looked at her—and his heart did not refuse to acknowledge the prettiness, and the grace, and the dignity which his eyes rested on—the old man was wondering within himself what could have induced him, at his time of life, to marry again—what could have induced her, seemingly all sweetness and kindness, to take an inveterate hatred to those two poor girls, Maud and Gertrude, who had been turned out of the house, forced to leave the home which they had every right to consider theirs, and he had been too weak, too much infatuated with Marian to prevent the execution of her plans. But that should not be. He was ill then, but he would soon be better, and so soon as he found himself a little stronger he would assume his proper position, and have the girls back again. *He had been giving way*

too much recently, and must assert himself. He was glad now he had said nothing about giving up the election to any one save Marian, as he should certainly go on with it—it would be a little healthy excitement to him; he had suffered himself to fall into very dull, moping ways, but he would soon be all right. If he could only get rid of that odd numbing pain in the left arm, he should soon be all right.

Little Dr. Osborne was in the habit of retiring to rest at an early hour. In the old days, before his "girl" married, he liked to sit up and hear her warble away at her piano, letting himself be gradually lulled off to sleep by the music; and in later times, when his fireside was lonely and when he was not expecting any special work, he would frequently drive over to Woolgreaves, or to the Churchills at the Park, and play a rubber. But since he had quarrelled with Mrs. Creswell, since her "most disrespectful treatment of him," as he phrased it, he had never crossed the threshold at Woolgreaves, and the people at the Park were away wintering in Italy, so that the little doctor generally finished his modest tumbler of grog at half-past ten and "turned in" soon after. He was a sound sleeper, his housekeeper was deaf, and the maid, who slept up in the roof, never heard anything, not even her own snoring, so that a late visitor had a bad chance of making his presence known. A few nights after the events just recorded, however, one of Mr. Creswell's grooms attached his horse to the doctor's railings and gave himself up to performing on the bell with such energy and determination, that after two minutes a window opened and the doctor's voice was heard demanding "Who's there?"

"Sam, from Woolgreaves, doctor, wi' a note."

"From Woolgreaves!—a note! What's the matter?"

"Squire's bad, had a fit, I heerd house-keeper say, and madam she have wrote this note for you! Come down, doctor; it's marked 'mediate, madam said. Do come down!"

"Eh?—what—Woolgreaves—had a fit—Mrs. Creswell—I'm coming!" and the window was shut, and in a few minutes Sam was shivering in the hall, while the doctor read the note by the gaslight in his surgery. "Hum!—'No doubt you'll be surprised'—should think so, indeed—'has been long ill'—thought so when I saw him in the Corn Exchange on Saturday—'just

now had some kind of frightful seizure'—poor, dear, old friend—'calls for you—in-sists on seeing you—for God's sake come'—dear me, dear me!" And the doctor wiped his honest old eyes on the back of his tattered old dressing-gown, and poured out a glass of brandy for Sam, and another for himself, and gave the groom the key of the stable, and bade him harness the pony, for he should be ready in five minutes.

The house was all aroused, lights were gleaming in the windows, as the doctor drove up the avenue, and Marian was standing in the hall when he entered. She stepped forward to meet him, but there was something in the old man's look which stopped her from putting out her hand as she had intended, so they merely bowed gravely, and she led the way to her husband's room, where she left him.

Half an hour elapsed before Dr. Osborne reappeared. His face was very grave and his eyes were red. This time it was he who made the advance. A year ago he would have put his arm round Marian's neck and kissed her on the forehead. Those days were past, but he took her hand, and in reply to her hurried question, "What do you think of him?" said, "I think, Mrs. Creswell, that my old friend is very ill. . It would be useless to disguise it—very ill indeed. His life is an important one, and you may think it necessary to have another opinion"—this a little pompously said, and met with a gesture of dissent from Marian—"but in mine, no time must be lost in removing him, I should say, abroad, far away from any chance of fatigue or excitement."

"But, Dr. Osborne—the—the election!"

"To go through the election, Mrs. Creswell, would kill him at once! He would never survive the nomination day!"

"It will be a dreadful blow to him," said Marian. But she thought to herself, "Here is the chance of our escape from the humiliation of defeat by Walter Joyce! A means of evoking sympathy instead of contempt!"

AS THE CROW FLIES.

DUE EAST. SUDBURY TO LOWESTOFT.

THE crow can hardly resist a short slant flight from Ipswich to Sudbury, which lies embowered among its deep sunken green lanes in the valley of the willowy Stour, which is here gay with quick wherries.

The quiet thorough English scenery in which Gainsborough delighted, is to be found all round "Subbry;" deep lanes, winding between steep fern-covered banks, and under the shade of huge elms. The ash feathers at the edge of

the swaying cornfields, and beech trees, mantled in ivy, guarding leafy ponds; the church tower, the cottage doors, the rustic children, all remind us of Gainsborough, who was born here in 1727. A wood is still shown where Gainsborough, when a child, used to play truant that he might sketch. One of his earliest efforts was to draw the face of a rustic thief, whom he had seen from behind some bushes, suspiciously eyeing a pear-tree in his (Gainsborough's) father's garden. The clever boy, reluctantly confessed to be a genius, was presently sent to London to study under Gravelot and under Hayman, the rollicking friend of Hogarth. He returned to Suffolk at eighteen, and there, while sketching the woodland scenes, fell in love with a pretty figure in the foreground, one Margaret Burt, a young Scotch lady of good family, supposed to be the natural daughter of the Pretender. The young pair left Sudbury, took a small house at Ipswich at a rent of six pounds a year, and were patronised by Philip Thicknesse, the governor of Landguard Fort, who afterwards, when the painter had the audacity to become independent, maligned him, as Walcott had also maligned his refractory protégé Opie. The governor, a great man at Ipswich, taught the young painter the violin, and gave him a thirty-guinea commission.

This picture of Landguard and the port of Harwich, being engraved by Major, gained the painter great fame; and in 1758, growing like a flower too big for his first pot, he removed to Bath, and took grand lodgings in the Circus. In spite of the alarms of his good but thrifty wife, Gainsborough now threw off the oppressive patronage of Thicknesse, and gradually pushed on his prices for a head from five guineas to eight, and for whole lengths to a hundred. He grew up a rough, humorous, intractable genius, passionately fond of music and landscape painting, but obliged to drudge at portraits to earn bread and cheese. He was always buying some new musical instrument, and trying to learn it, and he filled his house with theorbos, violins, hautboys, and viol-di-gambas. Gainsborough next removed to London, and took the Duke of Schomberg's house in Pall Mall. He had already exhibited for thirteen years in the Royal Academy, and his success was sure. Even Reynolds grew jealous at his fame. He painted the Royal Family, and that at once made him fashionable, in spite almost of himself; for he was brusque, proud, and blunt, and had no more tact than a Bozjesman. He confessed that the Duchess of Devonshire's beauty baffled his pencil, and he fairly threw up the sponge when Garrick and Foote grimaced before him. Though subject to irresistible depressions, Gainsborough was delightfully original in society, and, in the company of Johnson, Sheridan, or Burke, appeared in his best colours. The landscapes of this Suffolk painter were not popular during his life, nor did his natural and entirely ingenuous and bright village children by any means delight the mass. He died, in 1788, of cancer, arising from a cold caught at the trial of Warren Hastings. Al-

most his last words were, "We are all going to heaven, and Vandyke is of the company." Gainsborough's letters are the most delightful compound of simple-hearted sense and nonsense almost ever written.

Along the Suffolk coast now drifts the crow, from the Landguard sand-hills to those low gravel cliffs that reach to Bawdsey. It is the country painted for us in the Dutch manner so admirably by Crabbe.

We are bearing away for Aldborough and the sea-side haunts of George Crabbe, "the poet of nature and of truth," the simple-minded, reflective old Suffolk clergyman, who struggled upwards towards the light, and pondered so deeply and sadly over the mysteries of our poor human nature.

At Aldborough Bay a shingly beach parts the marshes of the Alde from the sea, while northward the coast, low and flat for a previous seven monotonous miles, gradually rises into cliffs of sand and shingle.

From Dunwich to Southwold the cliffs of chalk, rubble, and sand, with gravel and red loam below, tell wonderful stories of the slow changes of the earth's surface. Almost a complete coral reef exists between Aldborough and Orford. Shells of the Indian ocean are found in what was once probably the bed of the old German Ocean—the grandfather, we mean, of the present one. From it have been dug teeth of mastodons, bones of rhinoceros, teeth of bear and whale, antlers of deer, spikes of rays, and teeth of leopards and hogs. In this fluviomarine formation, says Sir C. Lyell, about twenty species of land and freshwater shells have been discovered, and about ninety marine species; of these the proportion resembling those now living does not exceed the ratio of sixty per cent.

The Alde once entered the sea at Aldborough, but the flood tides, gradually throwing up ridges of sand and shingle, deflected the river to the south, and its ancient outlet was transferred ten miles to the south-west. An ancient sea-cliff has been left stranded and deserted far inland. The Alde now flows within two hundred yards of the coast southward, then suddenly runs parallel to the sea with strange wilfulness, and runs divided from it only by a long, narrow, fenny spit of land. At Orford the stream widens into the grandeur of an estuary. The not too lively town consists of one long street in the valley of the Slaughden, and is sheltered by a steep hill. The bay is bounded by Thorpe Point and Orfordness.

Crabbe the poet is the great name here, and his memory consecrates the dulness of a place the sea seems bent on slowly swallowing. The Crabbes are numerous both in Norfolk and Suffolk. It was a pilot named Crabbe, of Walton, who was consulted about the fleet of Edward the Third, not long before Cressy. The poet's grandfather was a collector of the customs at Aldborough, and his son George (the poet's father) kept a parish school in the porch of the church at Orford, and was afterwards pariah clerk at Norton, near Loddon,

in Norfolk. Returning to Aldborough, he became first warehouse-keeper, then collector of the salt dues. He was a man of strong, vigorous mind, renowned for business tact and powers of calculation. George Crabbe, the poet, was born in 1754; his next brother was a glazier; and the third became captain of a Liverpool slaver, and was set adrift to perish by some slaves who had mutinied; the fourth brother, also a sailor, was taken prisoner by Spaniards, and sent to Mexico, where he became a prosperous silversmith, till the priests persecuted him, and he then fled to Honduras. Aldborough was at first only a wretched cluster of small fishermen's houses, lying between the Church Cliff and the German Ocean. There were two parallel, unpaved streets running in dirty and noisome competition between rows of mean and scrambling houses; those nearest to the sea were often destroyed by storms. From a plan of the town in 1559, says the Reverend J. Ford, it appears that a range of dunes then existed between the town and the sea, and that the church was then more than ten times its present distance from the shore. The beach spread in three ridges: large rolled boulders, loose shingle, and at the fall of the tide a long, yellow stripe of fine hard sand. There were vessels of all sorts lolling with pitchy sides upon the shore, from the large heavy troll boat to the yawl and prame. There were fishermen drying their brown nets or sorting their fish, and near the gloomy old town-hall a group of pilots taking their short, quick, to-and-fro walk, as if longing for the old restrictions of the narrow and rolling deck, or watching for signals in the offing. Nor was the inland landscape either grand or smiling—only open, dull, sandy, rusty commons and sterile farms, with trees rusted and stunted by the salt winds. Crabbe has painted every feature of the scene. Slaughden quay he touches like a little Vandervelde:

Here samphire banks and salt wort bound the flood,
There stakes and seaweeds withering on the mud;
And higher up a ridge of all things base,
Which some strong tide has rolled upon the place;
Yon is our quay! those smaller boats from town
Its various wares for country use bring down.

By the impetuous salt-master, the quiet, studious, awkward boy was somewhat despised. "That boy," he used to say "must turn out a fool. John, and Bob, and Will are of some use about a boat, but what will that *thing* be good for?" Crabbe was known at Aldborough as a boy of reading, and was regarded with a certain respect. One day, when a rough lad he had angered was going to thrash him, an elder boy gravely put in his veto.

"No, no, you mustn't meddle with him," he said; "let *him* alone, for he ha' got larning."

When first sent to school at Bungay, Crabbe did not yet know how to dress himself, and the first morning, in great confusion, he whispered to his bedfellow,

"Can you put on your own shirt, for—for—I'm—afraid I can't."

In this rough Suffolk school Crabbe nearly

met his death, he and other boys were being punished for playing at soldiers by being stuffed into a large dog-kennel, known as "The Black Hole." Crabbe was suffocating. In despair he bit the hand of the boy next him. There arose a cry of "Crabbe is dying!" and the sentinel not a moment too soon released the stifling boy.

On leaving school, Crabbe was apprenticed to a surgeon; and while waiting for this situation was employed by his stern father in piling cheese and butter kegs at Slaughden quay. He concluded his apprenticeship with Mr. Page, a surgeon at Woodbridge, a market town seventeen miles from Aldborough. There was a long struggle before, in 1781, Crabbe visited London, won Burke by his simple-hearted ways, took orders, became chaplain to the Duke of Rutland, and eventually at Parham, Gleinham, and Readham, devoted his tranquil life to doing good.

This quiet watering-place was first frequented about the beginning of the century by a few persons of rank, who found Hastings and Brighton too gay and restless.

A noble modern writer, who has made Suffolk the background of some of his best novels, has taken up arms gallantly in defence of the scenery of East Anglia. He contends that the county that fostered the genius of Gainsborough and Constable, and nurtured that contemplative and mournful poet, "nature's sternest painter yet the best," Crabbe, is neither flat, dull, nor monotonous. From the brow of its hillocks, the crow may, he thinks, obtain gratifying glimpses of verdant and thickly-wooded landscape, of umbrageous park, of rivers glancing from dark recesses of shade, and of peaceful church towers, grey sentinels of leafy hamlets. "As the traveller," he says, in *Crew Rise*, "gets away from the heaths on the sea-coast on the one side, or the broad open fields of 'the light lands' on the other side of the county, and works his way into what is called by the aborigines 'the garden of Suffolk,' he unceasingly comes to breaks in the high fences which border the lanes he passes through, and these openings rejoice us with the sight of some snatch of scenery that refreshes the eye." And truly the crow, cutting his swift path from Aldborough to Framlingham, does get by the way many pleasant glimpses of abbey ruins, of farmhouses built out of half demolished mansions, of snug cottages at the corners of woods, of old halls almost hidden by broad-armed oaks, and of high roads, cool and umbrageous as park avenues.

A continued series, indeed, of quiet Gainsborough landscapes surround Framlingham, the old town of the Iceni, standing on hilly ground near the sources of the river Ore, which falls into the sea at Oreford. Britons, Romans, Saxons, and Danes chased each other in and out of this fortified place, till at last a sort of sensible compromise was effected, and, shaking down altogether in a clubbable way, the Danes gave the good-natured place the Saxon name of *Fremdlingham* (*strangers' home*). The town

of the mere and the river soon became a stronghold, and Redwald, one of the earliest of the East Anglian kings, is said to have occupied the castle with his spearmen. More certain it is that King Edmund was enthroned at Framlingham, and here enjoyed some happy days of a troublous reign. After the battles of Thetford and Dunwich, the king was besieged at Framlingham by the ravenous sea robbers. The defeated monarch fled, but was pursued, shot to death with arrows, and then beheaded. His head was found under a bush at Hoxne, a small village on the Waveney, and there the martyr's body lay till it was removed to Beodrics-worth, which soon became a much-frequented shrine of special sanctity, and acquired its present name of Bury St. Edmunds.

Every place of this kind has had its culminating time of greatness up to which it rose, and after which it fell. The coronation period came to Framlingham in 1553. Young King Edward had died at Greenwich in July of that year. The moment he appeared to be dying, the crafty and ambitious Northumberland attempted to get the two princesses into his power. Mary was already within half a day's journey of the wolf's den when the Earl of Arundel sent her secret intelligence of the conspiracy. She instantly hurried to Framlingham, and gathered together an army of thirteen thousand men under its walls. The Tudor blood burned within her; her father's lion spirit asserted itself. She wrote to the chief nobles and gentlemen of England, calling on them to defend her crown and person, and to the council desiring them to proclaim her accession in London. Worst came to the worst, she could easily, on a defeat, fly to Yarmouth, and from there embark to Flanders. Nobles and yeomen flocked to her daily, and still faster came the billmen and bowmen directly they knew that she had promised not to alter the laws of good King Edward. The Earls of Bath and Sussex, the eldest sons of Lord Wharton and Lord Mordaunt, Sir William Drury, Sir Henry Benningfield, and Henry Jerningham, great Suffolk landowners, rode into Framlingham at the head of their retainers. Sir Edward Hastings brought over a small army. Northumberland's fleet, driven into Yarmouth by a storm, also declared for Mary. In the mean time poor Lady Jane Grey reigned unwillingly in the Tower. The duke (the real monarch), as he left London to join his army, said to Lord Grey:

"Many come out to look at us, but I find not one who cries, 'God speed us!'"

The moment Northumberland left London, the council quitted the Tower, and, going to Baynard's Castle near St. Paul's, proclaimed Mary queen. Suffolk surrounded the Tower, and the poor queen of a ten days' reign returned to her quiet country life and those books which had been the dear companions of her studious youth. Northumberland, finding his army of six thousand men rapidly disbanding, laid down his arms at Bury St. Edmunds. Mary soon after entered London in triumph, and was welcomed by her brave sister Elizabeth at the head of a

thousand horse, which she had levied. On the 22nd of August Northumberland deservedly lost his mischievous head on Tower Hill, and two of his special abettors were also executed with him. Sentence was pronounced against Lady Jane Grey and Lord Guildford, but they were so young, neither of them being seventeen, that it seemed murder to carry severity further than imprisonment. But in February of the next year Wyatt's unsuccessful march on London, with four thousand Kentish men, proved fatal to Lady Jane and her husband, who were, soon after Wyatt's defeat, executed privately on Tower Green.

In the old flint church of St. Michael at Framlingham—a fine decorated building, with a perpendicular clerestory, a very rich timber roof, and a grand tower ninety feet high—there are some interesting monuments of the Norfolk family. On the south side of the chancel is the effigy of that Thomas, third Duke of Norfolk, who led our English knights and archers at Flodden to the slaughter of ten thousand Scotchmen and their chivalrous, hot-blooded King James. That heavy blow stopped the inroads of our warlike neighbours for many a day; yet, after all, the dogs of war were "*scotched*, not killed;" and in Charles's time the Lowlanders and Highlanders were down on us again, till Cromwell beat them small as dust at Dunbar, and scattered them like chaff before the wind. On the north side of Framlingham chancel rests the counterfeit of the poet Earl of Surrey—he and his countess, the successful rival of the fair Geraldine (who was born here), rest hand in hand unchangeably on a tomb erected 1617. It has never been discovered who the Geraldine really was to whom he addressed his sonnets. Horace Walpole tried to prove it was Lady Elizabeth Fitzgerald, but she was only a child (twelve or thirteen) when those verses were written. Surrey, though not a genius, was useful to our succeeding poets; for he transplanted for us the Italian sonnets and introduced blank verse.

Near the Earl of Surrey rests that friend with whom he was brought up, and to whom he alludes in his poem, "*The Prisoner at Windsor*," Henry, the Duke of Richmond, the bastard son of Henry the Eighth, who married Mary, a sister of the Earl. There are also here effigies of Mary Fitzalan and Margaret Audley, first and second wives of Thomas, the fourth Duke of Norfolk, beheaded in 1573.

On to Southwold, the centre of later history and of many old sea legends of the great wars with the Dutch, that ensanguined the North Sea and the east coast all through the reckless reign of Charles the Second. Southwold is the wreck of a larger town destroyed by fire in April, 1659, and was once the rival of Dunwich. This latter place was the abode of East Anglian kings and of prelates also, till the see became part of the diocese of Norwich. It formerly boasted eight churches, besides convents, hospitals, and a chantry. It

was so wealthy a place, indeed, that when Richard Cœur-de-Lion fined the East Anglian ports for supplying his enemies with corn, Ipswich and Yarmouth only paid two hundred marks each, while Dunwich paid one thousand and sixty marks. An inundation of the sea eventually destroyed the town, now a mere cluster of sloping cornfields round some grey monastic ruins. The King's Holm, tradition says, was buried under a flood of shingle, and the Cock-and-Hen hills were at the same time washed away with all the chief buildings of the town.

The coast between Dunwich and Southwold is flat, and terraced with shingle. The low coast line with level pastures and dykes behind is broken only by the tall tower of Walberswick and the rounded height that terminates Solebay. At the mouth of the Blythe long timber piles stretch out to form a port, while a broad tongue of shingle spreads across the entrance, and through the neck so narrowed the tide runs in furiously. The inland scenery is Dutch in character. The meadows are surrounded by high banks, on the tops of which run the paths, and the common lands are under the charge of "*fen reeves*." The town once depended on its trade with Iceland for ling, but the Southwold fishermen (one hundred boats or so) now depend on the catching of soles and shrimps, and on the visitors, who are attracted by the breezy crags and the dry healthy gravel on which the houses are built. The fishermen congregate on the outer side of the bluff, round their two shelter sheds, watching the boatbuilders, smoking beside the capstans, or on clear nights trying to make out Orford light. There are two government batteries (twelve eighteen-pounders) at Eyecliff, where the Danes once had a fort, and at Gunhill is a battery of six old-fashioned guns taken at Preston by the Pretender, and re-captured at Culloden. The Duke of Cumberland gave them to the town. The temperature of Southwold is so mild that it is always honoured by the earliest arrival and latest departure of that distinguished visitor of ours—the swallow. Amber and jet are dredged up here, and cornelians and agates hide themselves among the vulgar pebbles of the beach. Beyond Southwold the crow discerns new features of the Suffolk coast scenery in the Broad (as at Euston and Covehithe), where large sheets of water collect near the shore, and after heavy rains are allowed to escape by sluices into the sea.

Rough paths through scrub, rushes, and sea holly, over a rugged beach strewn with lumps of shelly red crag, then shingle and sand hills, low cliffs covered with fern and heath, hollows of loose sand, and bluffs honeycombed by sand martins, guide the crow to Solebay. On the calm blue waters, under these silent cliffs, took place on May 2nd, 1672, a tremendous naval battle, when sixty-five English sail, commanded by the Duke of York, encountered thirty-five French men-of-war under the Count d'Étrées, and ninety-one Dutch

vessels led by the famous De Ruyter. He and Tromp had tormented and insulted us long enough, and we owed him and Van Ghent one for having in 1667 taken Sheerness, sailed up the Medway, and burnt six men-of-war. The Dutch, too, had had their wrongs; and they were savage with us for having tried so hard to swoop down on their Smyrna fleet and its two millions of treasure. They were stolid dogged old enemies, who had learned to disregard our self-assumed sovereignty of the seas, and they took a good deal of "punishment." De Wit was eager to give us a final crippling blow at sea and leave him free to pour the musketeers of Utrecht and Guelderland on the French, who under Turenne and Condé were then taking and subduing Holland, town by town, and preparing for the famous passage of the Rhine. Pepys' friend, the Earl of Sandwich, had warned the duke of the danger of being netted in Southwold Bay, where the Dutch fire-ships could have burnt us like so many chips in a grate. The duke (never very sweet tempered) replied to the earl's cautions by a sneer at his timidity. The taunts rankled in the earl's soul, and he resolved to conquer or perish. The moment the Dutch appeared, closing their nets in upon us, he bore out of the bay to give the duke and the French admiral time to debouche, and went straight at the enemy like a mad lion. He killed our old foe Van Ghent, and beat off his ship after a furious fight. He then sank a Dutch man-of-war and three fire-ships that grappled with him. His own vessel was now shattered and pierced, and two-thirds of his nine hundred men were killed or wounded, yet he still continued to blaze at the enemy till a third fire-ship closed upon him, and refusing to escape, he then perished fighting to the last. Nor was the duke all this time idle. He bore down on De Ruyter, and hammered at him for two hours till night came. Two-and-thirty battles the grey old Dutch veteran had fought, but never, he declared, so hard a one as this. In the morning the Duke of York (certainly not a Nelson) thought it prudent to retire. The Dutch, though disabled, beginning, however, to harass his retreat, he turned on them, and renewed the fight, while Sir Joseph Jordan, who led our van, got the weather gauge of De Ruyter, who then fairly fled, pursued by the duke to the coast of Holland. We were close at his rear, and only a timely Dutch fog saved fifteen of his leaky and lagging vessels. The French took little part in the fray, their captains being instructed by Louis the Fourteenth to leave the English and the Dutch to fight it out between them. The French, however, lost two ships and their rear admiral; we six ships (one taken, two burned, three sunk) and two thousand men. The Dutch lost three large vessels. It was not much of a victory, that must be confessed, and far unlike the tremendous overthrow of the Dutch by Monk in 1653, when Van Tromp perished. It is a curious fact about this battle of Solebay that the sound of the cannonading was heard thirty miles. The Earl of Ossory, then at

Euston, eight miles north of Bury St. Edmunds, hearing the firing, instantly took horse and galloped the thirty miles to join the fleet.

But this story is quite surpassed by a Cambridge tradition of Newton. In June, 1666—those three days that the English and Dutch fleets were incessantly wrangling and fighting between the Naze and the North Foreland, distant at least seventy miles from Cambridge—Newton, then a Bachelor of Arts at Trinity, and just commencing his optical discoveries, came one day into the hall and told the fellows that a battle was being fought between the Dutch and the English, and that the latter were having the worst of it. He had been studying, he said, in the observatory over the gateway, and had there heard the vibration of cannon. It seemed to grow louder as it came nearer our coast; he therefore concluded that we had had the worst of it. A recent writer on Solebay quotes the following fine old naval ballad:

I cannot stay to name the names
Of all the ships that fought with James,
Their number or their tonnage;
But this I say, the noble host
Right gallantly did take its post,
And cover'd all the hollow coast
From Walderswyck to Dunwich.
Well might you hear their guns I guess
From Sizewell Gap to Easton ness.
The show was rare and sightly:
They batter'd without let or stay
Until the evening of that day—
'Twas then the Dutchmen ran away,
The Duke had beat them tightly.
Of all the battles gained at sea,
This was the rarest victory
Since Philip's grand Armada.
I will not name the rebel Blake;
He fought for Roundhead Cromwell's sake,
And yet was forced three days to take
To quell the Dutch bravado.
So now we've seen them take to flight—
This way and that where'er they might,
To windward or to leeward.
Here's to King Charles, and here's to James,
And here's to all the captains' names,
And here's to all the Suffolk dames,
And here's to the house of Stuart.

Up the Waveney now for the crow; Waveney, "the waving water" of the Saxons, the stream that winds through broad green tranquil meadows spotted red with cattle, and past rushy flats and draining mills, and rows of poplars, and heathy slopes, and patches of fir, and golden swaying oceans of corn, with towers and spires for distant landmarks. Bungay "le bon Eye" (the beautiful island) we strike for, a sleepy old East Anglian town, with a round-towered church, and old flint walls of Hugh Bigod's Castle that are now embowered in the "King's Head" gardens. Hugh Bigod was one of those proud barons who rebelled against Henry the Second. It was in 1174 that the King sent for Hugh Bigod, and the story still lives in a ballad. The very old chant (so old it can hardly go alone) says:

The king has sent for Bigod bold,
In Essex whereat he lay;
But Lord Bigod laughed at his poursuivant,
And stoutly thus did say,

"Were I in my castle of Bungay
Upon the river of Waveney,
I would not care for the King of Cokenay
Nor all his bravery."

The Bailly he rode, and the Bailly he ran,
To catch the gallant Lord Hugh,
But for every mile the Bailly rode,
The Earl he rode more than two.

When the Bailly had ridden to Bramfield oak,
Sir Hugh was at Iksale bower,
When the Bailly had ridden to Holsworth cross,
He was singing in Bungay tower.

We regret, however, to state that the bold Bigod, spite of all his bragging and his five hundred soldiers from Framlingham, proved dunghill at last, and instead of replying to the king with arrows and crossbow bolts, craftily capitulated after the following unworthy manner. When the king arrived,

Sir Hugh took threescore sacks of gold
And flung them over the wall,
Says, "Go your way in the devil's name,
Yourself and your merry men all;
But leave me my castle of Bungay
Upon the river of Waveney,
And I'll pay my shot to the King of Cokenay."

St. Mary's church at Bungay once formed part of a Benedictine nunnery, founded by Roger de Glanvil and his Countess Gundrída, in the reign of Henry the Second, that very reign in which Bigod was besieged by the King of Cockayne. In Edward the First's time, this nunnery contained a prioress and fifteen religious sisters, but at the Dissolution there were only seven nuns there living on a yearly income of sixty-two pounds two shillings and fourpence. Henry the Eighth gave this nunnery to the Duke of Norfolk. It was upon this same St. Mary's church that a tremendous storm of thunder and lightning broke, August 4, 1577. Several persons were struck. In this same awful storm—which burst out between nine and ten A.M., during divine service, which was earlier in those days than now—forty persons were struck down by lightning at the church in the adjoining village of Blythburgh. The superstition of the Suffolk people was roused to the utmost by this falling of fire from heaven, and some excited imaginations declared they saw between the flashes a huge black dog, of Satanic origin, rush down the aisle and gripe one person in the back, and wring the necks of two others. The Waveney, at Bungay, is the boundary of Norfolk and Suffolk, and the small barges upon its waters bring from and carry into Suffolk stores of corn, malt, flour, coal, and lime. Bungay, quiet and even sleepy as it is now, has had its deep sorrows and its stormy troubles. In March, 1688 (James the Second), an irresistible fire destroyed, in four hours only, the church, the market cross, and four hundred houses, leaving only one small street and a few cottages standing.

On to Lowestoft, that first

Of all old England's busy towns, uplifts
Its orisons and greets the rising morn.

According to Mr. Walcott, the name of the town in *Domesday* was *Lothor-Wistoft*, that

is, the toft or cluster of houses by the Loth (low) river, and he supposes that Lothor and Irling, the Danes, after the conquest of Essex, in 1047, established a station here to receive Danish colonists. The old Danish fishing town, on which a modern watering place has engrafted itself, stands on an eminence backed by hills and with broad sands at its feet. Below the houses on the brow of the ridge, hanging gardens slope to the alluvial land lying between Lake Lothing and the sea. Beyond this flat land the ground rises at Kirkley into another line of cliffs, which stretch along the Suffolk coast, broken through here and there by rivers. The beach along the shore is a strip of shingle, from which runs the great shoal called the Fukefield Flats, probably submerged land; but the sands of the dunes, in front of Lowestoft, are never overflowed. The flood-stream and the ebb-tide have both scooped out bays and formed shoals of the displaced material.

The legends of Lowestoft are chiefly of a naval and piscatorial kind. In the Civil War times the Cavaliers of Lowestoft were always privateering against Yarmouth, and the cliffs between the rival towns were constantly vibrating to the sound of their cannons. There has, indeed, always been a jealousy between the two places, and it existed even in the times of old Potter (1789—1804), the worthy and learned vicar of Lowestoft, gratefully known to us in our school days for those flowery translations of *Æschylus*, *Sophocles*, and *Euripides*, handy "cribs" much resorted to by "first-form" boys. Old Potter was jealous for the honour of Lowestoft, and when the primate of those days once wrote to him, and addressed the letter "Lowestoft, near Yarmouth," the vicar expostulated in his grand and flowing manner: "The next time your grace will be pleased to write simply Lowestoft. Lowestoft does not want Yarmouth for a direction post, for Lowestoft was ere Yarmouth rose out of the azure main."

The Swan Inn on the east side of High-street is still pointed out as the head-quarters of Cromwell in 1644. Short as that visit was, the bronze face, the plain steel corselet, and the simple, soldierly dress will always haunt the memory of Lowestoft. The fishing people here were always proud of their sea trophies; formerly at weddings, rows of ship flags used to be hung across the streets, and some of these had been captured by Arnold, a Lowestoft man, from the Royal Philip, a Spanish man-of-war. Close by Lowestoft at Barsham rectory house, Catherine, Lord Nelson's mother, was born, 1725. Admiral Sir Thomas Allin, who, in the time of the Commonwealth, snapped up the rich Smyrna fleet, was a Lowestoft man; and from the same part of the coast came also those two brave seamen, Sir John Ashby and Sir Andrew Leake: the latter, "the handsome captain," admired by Queen Anne, who assisted Rooke in the taking of Gibraltar from the Spaniards (1704). He was desperately wounded in an action off

Malaga, but would not go below, and sat erect and grand in his cocked hat and gold-laced coat, and kept his post in an arm-chair on his quarter-deck till he saw the shattered sails of the enemy fade back into the smoke. Then he arose, smiled, and fell dead. There is a monument to this resolute old warrior in the chequered flint-work church of Saint Margaret. The same church contains monuments of old "Crib" Potter (bless him!), of John Tanner, who edited the *Monasticon* of his learned and ponderous brother, the Bishop of St. Asaph; of Lord Chief Justice Holt; and of poor heretical Whiston, the heterodox Holborn rector and the suspected professor of mathematics at Cambridge. Whiston was vicar here from 1698 to 1703. Swift wrote terrible verses upon him, and held him up to the most scathing ridicule, but he really seems to have been only a clever, eccentric, wrong-headed enthusiast, always doing odd and mistaken things.

But the greatest event of which Lowestoft ever was a witness was the great pounding match between the English and Dutch fleets in June, 1665. The Duke of York, Rupert, the Earl of Sandwich, Penn, Ayscough, and Lawson led our grand fleet of one hundred and fourteen ships of war, not including fire-ships and ketches. The Dutch had only one hundred sail; but then they were led by Opdam and Van Tromp, and their presence was worth twenty frigates. We lost only one vessel. The Dutch, bleeding and beaten, hauled off eventually to the Texel, with a loss of eighteen ships taken and fourteen burnt or sunk. It was a glorious victory; Pepys, proud of his patron, the Earl of Sandwich, says the Dutch neglected the opportunity of the wind, and so lost the benefit of their fire-ships. It was very hot in the duke's ship, the *Royal Charles*, where one and the same shot killed the Earl of Falmouth, Muskerry, and Sir Richard Boyle (the Earl of Burlington's second son). It was reported that Mr. Boyle's head struck down the duke, who was covered with his blood and brains. We lost about seven hundred men, the Dutch eight thousand. At this very time the Plague had just broken out in London, and, indeed, only the day before the entry of this victory, Pepys says:

"The hottest day that ever I felt in my life. This day, much against my will, I did in Drury-lane see two or three houses marked with a red cross upon the doors, and 'Lord have mercy upon us' writ there, in which was a sad sight to me, being the first of the kind that, to my remembrance, I ever saw."

The Lowestoft two-masted luggers are famous in the North Sea. The town boasts some twenty-five luggers and fifty "half-and-half" boats. In 1802 the Lowestoft men caught thirty thousand mackerel; in 1853 seven hundred and fifty thousand in only ten weeks. They were valued at ten thousand pounds. It is calculated that the nets of the Lowestoft and Yarmouth fishermen, if placed in a straight line, would reach two hundred miles. The herring fishery commences on this east coast

a fortnight before Michaelmas, and it lasts to Martinmas.

The prosperity of Lowestoft commenced in 1827, when Mr. Cubitt began operations to form Lake Lothing, with its one hundred and sixty acres to the south-west, into an inner harbour and part of a ship canal to Norwich. Before that, a rampart of sand had formed between Lake Lothing and the sea, and at times the lowlands used to be flooded, and the bridge at Mutford, two miles from the coast, to be carried away by the spring tides. In 1831 the works were completed at a cost of eighty-seven thousand pounds, and the river Waveney re-wedded to the sea. Government took possession of the harbour in 1842, in default of the liquidation of advances made for the works, and in 1844 it was sold to Mr. Peto.

The inner harbour, two miles long with three thousand feet of wharfrage, will accommodate vessels of four hundred tons, and those which draw fifteen feet at any time of the tide. The railway was opened in 1847. The south pier is one thousand three hundred feet long. The north pier, devoted chiefly to the Danish cattle trade, has often sheltered five hundred sail. The dry dock cost ten thousand pounds. In 1845 there were only four hundred and ten vessels frequenting Lowestoft; in 1851 one thousand six hundred and thirty-six vessels of one hundred and thirty-three thousand nine hundred and fourteen tons entered the harbour. The town now boasts one thousand six hundred houses and a population of more than six thousand seven hundred and eighty-one persons. The herring curing-houses are on the Denes, the sands at the foot of the cliffs. In the north and south roads seven hundred sail are sometimes seen at anchor, sheltered by the Corton and Newcome sand-banks; the light-house for the chief channel is movable. A gong sounds on the Stanford sand floating-light during fogs.

COLUMBIA-SQUARE MARKET.

A DREAM, AND THE INTERPRETATION THEREOF.

"Must it be always thus?" I woke and wept,
For in my dream a horror o'er me crept.
Methought I wandered through a dreary maze
Of alleys foul, and dim and darkened ways,
And all the faces as they passed me by,
Pale men and women, age and infancy,
Hurried along amid a dismal din,
Wearing an aspect dark of care and sin;
While through the doleful night from sunset to sunrise
Rose curses, women's groans, and children's cries.
Again I dreamed, and in my troubled sleep
I heard a voice that whispered, "Cease to weep;
A change is passing o'er this suffering throng,
There shall be light and gladness, prayer and song;
Mark well the vision!" Sudden, as in air,
Arose a princely pile on pillars fair,
And through the open gate and arches wide,
The crowd pressed in from morn to eventide:
And in the pauses of the vision came
Loud benedictions on a woman's name.

But when the dream had ended, all in vain I sought
To bring that gentle name before my waking thought.

At last there came an April morning bright;
 Fair rose the sun, touching the roofs with light.
 Wondering, I stood, within a stately square,
 Rich with carved capitals on pillars fair;
 And, in the midst, the palace and the hall,
 And the wide gateway open now for all!
 I knew the place, and in my heart I knew
 The time had come to prove the vision true—
 Now shall I know her name by whom this change is
 wrought;

"Surely a crowned queen!" I ignorantly thought.

Prince, peer, and prelate, pass along the street.
 The crowds are silent; they are there to greet
 One only: so they care not for the state
 Of those the world deems noble, fair, or great.
 There is a hush, and then a deafening cheer—
 A *people's voice*! She comes, she comes—*she's here!*
 No sovereign she, save that she rules by love,
 Drawing her sway from the pure Fount above.
 O, gentle lady, may thy work be blest
 To thousands when thou art thyself at rest!
 And may the name of ANGELA remain
 Watchword of pity in the homes of pain!
 So shall thy memory through the years endure
 Most gracious woman—friend of England's poor!

MY FIRST MONEY.

It was a sixpence! New, clean, and shiny, bearing upon it the image and superscription of our queen: Victoria, D. G. Britanniarum, &c., just like other sixpences, but so white, so glossy, and so well-struck, that no other sixpence on earth could have borne comparison with it.

This was not a fact open to question. I had already classed it among the articles of my belief, when taking the "sixpence" delicately between my fingers I laid it tenderly upon my bed, and then knelt down on the floor in order to have a better view of it. This was my first adoration of Mammon, my first worship of the golden—or, to speak by the card, the silver—calf. I was five years old; the sixpence was four years and a half my junior. Four years and a half! This was a great deal, the advantage of age was manifestly on my side, and this, I suspect, had not a little to do with the semi-patronising glances which, notwithstanding my immense veneration for this idolised sixpence, I occasionally ventured to throw upon it. For I should not, I feel, have gazed thus at an elder sixpence. An octogenarian coin, for instance, would have impressed me with a certain degree of awe. It might have been round the world in the breeches-pocket of Captain Cook, it might have witnessed Trafalgar from the waistcoat of Lord Nelson, it might have passed through the hard fingers of the Iron Duke. A sixpence of that sort could not have been viewed with flippancy. No, it was better to have a young and inexperienced sixpence, a *sixpence* with all

its troubles before it, like a youthful bear. It and I were more on a footing of equality; there was no need for me to stand upon ceremony with it, and I could freely give vent to my sentiments in its presence without transgressing the laws of propriety. There was no fear of its looking sourly at me, as much as to say, "You little simpleton, it is lamentable for a coin like me to fall into such ill-bred hands as yours. Nor Burke, nor Sheridan, nor Charles James Fox, all of whom I knew most intimately, ever grinned at me as you do; and the young William Pitt (to whom I was introduced by his illustrious father the Earl of Chatham), never laughed at me."

That was the great advantage of a young sixpence, it being so fresh to the ways of society. There was no danger of its having learned its manners from the Prince Regent, or modelled its demeanour upon that of Lord Castlereagh. It could afford to be indulgent if I chuckled too loud, and could make allowances, if in the jubilant pride of possession, I rubbed my hands too ecstatically. Besides, considering the matter from a more material point of view, a young sixpence was larger, brighter, heavier, than an old one; there seemed to be more of it; there were no disgraceful patches of black about it, such as spoke of a sojourn in a dust-bin, in the till of a rag-shop, or in the purse of an economical sweep. The features of the queen upon it were not disfigured by scars, crosses, or knife-marks to prove that its former possessors suspected the honesty of their familiars, and were obliged for prudence sake to mark their coins. It had no unseemly holes bored in it, and no Hebrew had sweated it to the thinness of a bit of tin. It had everything in its favour—beauty, youth, distinction, and novelty. For you must remember it was my *first* sixpence, the first coin upon which I had ever gazed as my own, the first money of which I had ever had the free disposal. True, a few specimens of the currency had occasionally passed through my hands, in the shape of fugitive halfpence; but as my mother had always requested me to put these into the poor-box, I could scarcely be said to have had the full enjoyment of them. Hence this money was indeed my first, and, O Plutus! the gold mines of Peru, made over to me by bond, duly signed and sealed, would have delighted me less than this sixpence.

It was my father who had given it me, and under memorable circumstances. He

had been a long while involved in one of those suits in Chancery, which are the triumphs of our legislation. Seven-and-twenty years had it lasted, but at the end of that time, by a happy dispensation of Providence, he had been so fortunate as to gain his cause. Lawyers, solicitors, and barristers had, however, been to work so merrily that all costs and expenses paid, there was left of the estate which formed the bone of contention, the exact sum of five pounds ten shillings and twopence. Three letters and a consultation from our family solicitor, informing us of this edifying result, swallowed up the five pounds of this total, and the conscientious member of Lincoln's-inn then scrupulously forwarded to us the remaining ten shillings and twopence, merely deducting therefrom six and eightpence, price of the envelope in which the residue was enclosed.

My father hereupon ranged seven sixpences on our breakfast table. "My boy," he said, "see what comes of going to law in Great Britain! Your mother has told you that I have won my suit in chancery?"

"Yes, papa."

"Well, then, look! That is all I get of it," and he pointed grimly at the sixpences.

I opened wide my eyes.

"All that you get of the whole *suit*!"

I echoed, with a puzzled air, firmly convinced that a suit in chancery was composed as other suits are, of a coat, waistcoat, and trousers. "Why, papa, those are only the buttons!"

This deplorable joke had earned me my sixpence. My father had thrown it over to me, laughing, and, like a dog who is pelted with a bone, I had rushed hastily off with it for fear they should think of taking it back again.

SIX...PENCE!

For a time anything like cool reflection was impossible. I was too giddy, too startled, to think. How think, indeed, when one has sixpence! My sixpence was as a moon of which the rays dazed me; my head swam, my fingers tingled, my eyes saw whirling through the air in a fantastic gallop several millions of sixpences, all white, all lately issued from the mint, all bearing upon them, like my sixpence, Victoria, D. G., Britanniarum, &c., with her Majesty's head and the royal arms.

At last, however (and happily, too, for I was a small boy, and unused to these emotions), the intensity of my sensations subsided. I grew more philosophical, and

after a time was enabled to bring upon the subject that was absorbing me, a becoming amount of self-possession. You know, of course, what it was, this subject that was absorbing me? It was the expenditure of my sixpence. Like a Chancellor of the Exchequer with the surplus of a year's budget, I was wondering what I should do with it.

Momentous question! But it needed a refreshing breeze of out-door air to enable me to solve it with coolness. I accordingly rose from my bedside, where I knelt like a Persian worshipping the sun, and having laid my elbows and my sixpence upon the sill of the open window, "*multa corde volutans*," began deeply to meditate.

Now, it may, perhaps, be accepted as a symptom of my great precocity of spirit that I had not been merged above ten minutes in reflection before I had made up my mind upon one capital point, to wit, that there were only three things upon which my sixpence could worthily be expended: a donkey, a gold hunting watch, or a pewter squirt.

The only question to decide was upon which of these three my choice should pitch; and here was the rub. I had an artistical admiration for squirts—pewter squirts especially—which I classed amongst the sublimest contrivances due to the ingenuity of man. Their use as mediums for the conveyance of ink or soapy water upon the passers-by in the street had always struck me as peculiarly practical, and I think, on the whole, my sixpence would have gone to the purchase of one of these astonishing instruments had not a reflection suddenly fallen upon me, and drenched my enthusiasm as under a bucket of cold water. I could not remember ever having seen a grown-up man make use of a squirt! My father, for instance, had, to my certain knowledge, never spent his morning in squirting ink upon the public through the drawing-room window; and I could not recollect ever having heard my uncles advocate this species of pastime. This was important. Yesterday I had been a boy, and could do boyish things; to-day the case was altered, my sixpence had laid upon me the duties of manhood; it was necessary to be cautious and dignified. . . . I discarded the squirt, and two things then remained, the donkey and the gold watch. Once more I began to ponder.

The purchase of a donkey, I reasoned, offered unquestionable inducements. There were, first of all, the advantages of loco-

motion; in the second place, there was the satisfaction of personal vanity, for it was not to be doubted that upon my first appearance in public upon the back of an ass I should become the cynosure of neighbouring eyes, and at once take rank amongst the parish celebrities. This consideration nearly carried my vote by storm; but then, on the other hand, a donkey, I could not but admit, was a less handy possession than a gold hunting watch. The latter would go into one's pocket, whereas the former would not. Indeed it was more than probable that the donkey would need a certain amount of space to move about in, and if so, what was to be done, for we had no stables? Second thoughts bring counsel. I was a sharp boy, and I remembered the staircase. If the difficulty of bringing the donkey up to the third floor could be once overcome, I should be happy to allow him to sleep in my bedroom; there would be ample space for him in the corner close by the wash-hand-stand; and he would be a sociable companion when it rained. There was no fear of his catching a cold or a cough, as he might do if left down-stairs in the yard. Yes; but how about his food? The postchaise of my thoughts, which was at that moment going twenty miles an hour, here stuck of a sudden in a deep rut. I had never thought of the food. I was like the Irishman who had a clock. I had forgotten the works. I could not think of asking my father to board the donkey. The thing would be indelicate after he had generously given me sixpence; and yet from whatever point of view I considered the matter, the donkey, I was compelled to own, must eat. . . . I became miserable. I think I cried. I saw my donkey depart at a gallop, and scamper away into darkness, carrying away with him upon his back my hopes, my illusions, and my dreams of glory.

But after a few seconds my donkey returned as he had departed, at full gallop. The idea had struck me that his maintenance could be effected by an equitable distribution of my daily meals with him. This was the straw to the drowning man. Having decided that my coming donkey should be nourished upon roast mutton and batter pudding, I was about to rush out to effect my purchase when, attracted by a noise below, I thrust my head out of the window and saw a small boy, aged ten, throwing cherries in the air and trying to catch them in his mouth.

At this sight I forgot, for the minute, the donkey, the roast mutton and the batter pudding, and considered the cherries. It was a hot day, and I was thirsty. The cherries rose and fell, but always into the small boy's mouth and never into mine. Like Tantalus with the flow and ebb of waters, I began to find the thing monotonous. If one or two cherries would only have fallen on the ground now and then, the interest would have been enlivened; but no; one, two, three, four, all came down like plummets without deviating an inch from the right course, and each laugh of the small boy (for he was merry) gave me a violent inclination to see his head punched. I don't know what spirit of evil prompted me, but some such spirit inspired me with a baleful desire to substitute for one of the falling cherries, a pebble, a piece of coal, or a bit of soap. My eyes sparkled. The youth had thrown a plump bigaroon rather higher than usual, and stood with his hands extended, his head thrown back, his eyes shut, and his mouth gaping until it should return. The temptation was too strong. I felt frantically around me to find a projectile, and in sweeping my hand over the window-sill caught at something which, without pausing to look, I threw with all my might and main at the small boy. The thing struck him in the eye, and then bounded on the pavement. A shout of triumph escaped me; but at the same instant I burst into a cold sweat and staggered. The boy had stooped to pick up the thing that had hit him, and was holding it in his fingers. "Thank you!" he shouted joyously, and disappeared in the distance.

I had thrown him my sixpence!

A BENGAL MAGISTRATE.

A NATIVE of the soil, yet legal representative of her Majesty Queen Victoria, the magistrate of the Bengal village to which I had the honour of introducing the reader in a previous paper, is a foreshadower of the time when India shall be self-governed. By birth he is the son of a small zemindar, or landowner, an ignorant and downtrodden unit of an ignorant and downtrodden nation; by education he is a member of an exalted community whose interests and influence cover the whole surface of the globe. He commenced his studies at the government academy of his native town, but, having soon mastered all the information he could there acquire, he transferred the scene of his labours, at a still early age, to the Calcutta University. By the interest of an influential native, a friend of his father's, he was offered, at the close of

his educational career, an appointment in the Uncovenanted Civil Service, and, having immediately accepted it, and made his seat therein secure by fulfilling all the behests of the Civil Service examiners, he found himself, at the age of twenty-seven, in the undisputed possession of a snug and pretty bungalow, a salary of nearly five hundred a year, and a district that gave him but little trouble in its management.

In person, he is a man of middle height; his frame, of fair proportions, adds the uprightness and suppleness natural to his fellow-countrymen to the drilled carriage of the Western nations. His complexion is dark, even more so than is generally observable in the people of the country; but his features are well shaped, and his eyes bright and sparkling. His face betokens the kindness of his heart, and his bearing the manliness of his spirit. His conversation bears no trace of his foreign origin.

The court-house or cutcherry, wherein our Bengal magistrate performs the chief part of his public duties, is situated in the same compound as that which surrounds his private bungalow. It is a structure formed of four mud walls, surmounted by a thatched roof, which, projecting for several feet, serves as a verandah for the accommodation of the attendants and suitors of the court, or as a depository for the books and other articles required in the office.

It is eleven o'clock, and the magistrate has just taken his seat; the groups of natives who rose and respectfully salaamed to him as he passed from his house to the court, have once more settled themselves down in various attitudes expressive of pathetic patience. Some are extended at full length on the grass; some sitting under the shade of trees, which, stretching their wide branches over the compound, have long served to shelter alike accuser and accused. Some are squatted on the ground; some, bending down, are balancing themselves in a posture more comfortable than elegant, their elbows resting on their knees; others are standing about, watching the scene with countenances expressive of anything but intelligence; all, whether standing or sitting, whether at rest or in motion, are in an extreme state of excitement and satisfaction. This satisfaction is produced by the conviction that whatever they have come there for, or whether justice or injustice be the object of the whole proceedings, a "tumasha" is a delightful thing, and a commotion of any kind a pleasure to the heart of man. What seduction dwells in that magic word "tumasha" or its equivalent! To a native, dinner would be no consideration, a day's wages but as a feather in the balance, the probable starvation of himself and his family a trifle—nay, I believe, that even the fear of personal punishment would not prevent him from being present at a "sight." And so it is all the world over; the feeling that makes Guyaram Dass run where he sees a number of his countrymen gathered together, is the same that drives us to endure the toil of

pleasure-hunting, or to become one of a much-suffering crowd collected to hear the last new opera-singer.

As I pass across the compound, the silence imposed on the attendant crowds by the appearance of the magistrate has been broken, and the Babel of voices is growing wilder and wilder, until at last the inspector of police attendant at the court, or one of his myrmidons, appears at the door of the cutcherry, and with a few words of full-mouthed authority, followed by some common-place and low-murmured epithets of abuse, lulls the storm of voices for awhile.

The lawyers and court-officials, raising their hands to their faces, bow and make obeisance as I reach the verandah. I stoop under the low portal, and entering the court find myself in a small, ill-ventilated, and worse-lighted, room. The thatch is unconcealed by any attempt at a ceiling, and the walls bear the hue of the virgin earth. At one end of the apartment on a raised platform, stands a table, behind which sits the magistrate. At the foot of the platform, and on either side of it, stand two other tables for the use of the officials; two rows of rails placed at right angles to the bench form separate apartments for the accommodation of the various parties to the suits. The room is crowded with natives, silent and expectant. The magistrate observes my entrance, and beckoning, welcomes me with a smile, and a shake of the hand.

"Don't let me interrupt your proceedings, baboo," I say, as I take a chair by his side.

"You don't disturb me at all," he replies. "I am not very busy to-day. Will you take a glass of wine?"

"Thank you, I am not thirsty; still I shouldn't—" and a half-denial giving a half-consent—for in India one can never refuse an invitation, why I cannot tell, unless the heat produces a laxity in self-control as well as in bodily energy—he immediately orders wine and glasses to be brought over from his house. Refreshed, or otherwise, by the inevitable "peg," which, usually in the shape of "brandy-pawnee," that is, brandy mixed with water, or with some effervescing drink, the magistrate bids me light a cigar, and offering me his case, makes a selection therefrom on his own account. "Og laou!" or "bring fire!" is the immediate cry of obsequious attendants. Everything necessary for our comfort being now provided, I beg him to proceed with his day's work: for I am anxious, I inform him, to witness an Indian trial. He turns to his table and calls for the next case.

This proves to be one sent up by the superintendent of police from charges laid at the police station. Ruyal Mitter accuses Abdool Rohaman, a lad twelve years of age, of stealing a quantity of rice, worth one pice, a coin equivalent in value to a farthing and a half. Surely a matter of no great moment, one would think, but the loss appears to weigh heavily upon the spirits of the prosecutor, who, when summoned to give his evidence, states the cir-

cumstances of the case with many piteous lamentations and protestations of injured innocence. The crime, too, to judge from Abdool Rohaman's terror-stricken look and imploring attitude, has awakened terrible remorse, and created dread visions of punishment in the breast of its perpetrator. He, it appears, did in a boyish freak, or to satisfy the cravings of hunger, go to the private grain store of the plaintiff and feloniously extract therefrom a handful of rice, with which, intending to enjoy it at his leisure, he immediately retired into a field hard by the prosecutor's house. His purpose, however, was summarily frustrated by the unexpected appearance of the injured Ruyal Mitter, who, having observed the boy's exit from his house, and his subsequent munchings by the way, had from the premises drawn a conclusion, which induced him first of all to give the lad a sound cuffing and then lead him away to the nearest police station. The police inspector having taken him in charge, deposited him for safe custody in the village lock-up, in which primitive receptacle the unfortunate urchin was confined until the next morning, in company with a lunatic and a party of dacoits, when with other malcontents he was dragged before the magistrate. The result of the trial is an infliction on the culprit of a fine of one anna, of which sum one pice is to be handed over to the public-spirited prosecutor. The poor boy, with evident glee at the unexpected mildness of the sentence, fumbles in the cloth, which, surrounding his waist, is the only covering he wears, and after untying a great many knots, at length arrives at a hoard of small copper pieces, from which, having extracted four pice, he hands the amount to an officer of the court.

The next case wears a more serious aspect; but turns out to be one of the instances in which Bengalees evince their predilection for making a mock at Justice. The plaintiff states that during his absence one night from his home, a cow was stolen from his yard; and he asserts that on his return the missing animal was, with the help of the gomasta, or head man of the village, discovered on the premises of one of his neighbours. But the gomasta has been bribed, and the chokedar, or native watchman, has accepted four annas to bear witness against the defendant, and to state that he himself saw the cow in the defendant's house. The latter, however, when called on for his defence, throwing a perfect light upon the rather obscure evidence of his persecutors, proves the whole case to be a fabrication, and shows that the charge was brought against him from a feeling of revenge, he having declined to part with a piece of land to the prosecutor of which the latter greatly coveted the possession. The case is speedily dismissed, and as the parties leave the court the police inspector says something to the magistrate about prosecuting the plaintiff for bringing a false accusation.

Another chokedar then appears to answer a charge of attempting to extort money from a traveller by threatening to arrest him. The

evidence being conclusive, he is at once sentenced to a fine of four annas (sixpence).

"Nay, sahib!" exclaims the village watchman, a stalwart young man of six-and-twenty, "have pity on me, sahib! I won't do it again!" His feelings here become too much for him, and he weeps bitterly, lifting his clasped hands towards the dispenser of justice. "I can't pay four annas, great king! I shall be ruined! Oh, spare me, mighty lord, spare me!" The magistrate is inexorable, and the constables in attendance hustle the chokedar out of the court, whence he disappears, howling, in a manner dismal to hear, at the dark prospect of being obliged to pay four annas himself instead of extorting that sum from an innocent and inoffensive fellow-countryman.

So, with a constantly repeated exhibition of the smallest and meanest passions of human nature, the morning wears away. At about two o'clock the magistrate, inviting me to join him, leaves the court and goes to his own house, to refresh himself, after the exertions of the morning and his long sitting in the stifling atmosphere of the small and closely-crowded room, with tiffin or lunch. This is served in English fashion, for our magistrate can enjoy his meal and his glass, after the manner of white men, and can even share with them the same dish, as though the Vedas were an unwritten book, and Brahma a divinity of the Greek mythology.

But the virtues of the bench, and the amenities of civilised and social life, are not the only evidences of the superiority of the magistrate to the body of his countrymen; for municipal improvements, local institutions, and public charities, alike bear testimony to his assiduous and fostering care. Therefore, I express a wish to visit them, and to that end he, returning after tiffin to his court, and leaving me to enjoy another cigar, and amuse myself with the books lying on his well-furnished table, brings to a speedy conclusion the proceedings of the day, and, to the great mortification of the litigious Bengalees, and to the personal discomfort of the yet untied prisoners, dismisses his court, and prepares to accompany me.

As we walk along, my companion points out all the improvements he has made, or is making, in and about the village. Culverts, drains, bridges, direction-posts, railings, mended roads, and new footpaths, appearing in every direction, show that even the wilds of Bengal are amenable to civilisation; while lamps, springing up by the side of the principal highways, act at once as a public assurance company, and as a powerful arm of the executive: in the one case by guiding the weary traveller safely to his home: in the other by depriving the dacoit of his cloak of darkness.

Entering the village, we stop at a small house whence issues a monotonous chorus of childish voices. It is the village academy, a private institution presided over by a venerable moonshee, who, to judge from his appearance and that of his surroundings, lays

claim to no great erudition or high position among the learned of the earth. In matters temporal he seems to be on a level with his juvenile scholars, some twenty half naked brats of from four to eight years old, who, seated in a semicircle round him, are taking their first, and apparently most nauseous, sip of the Pierian spring. The schoolmaster rises, and greets his patron with a grateful smile and a respectful obeisance.

"Well, and how are your scholars getting on?" asks the magistrate.

"As well as they can, poor little fellows," replies the dominie, turning with a pleasant smile to his class of little urchins, whose chubby faces immediately reflect their master's good humour.

"Will you let them repeat the alphabet, moonashee? My friend here wishes to hear them."

The schoolmaster turns to his scholars, elongates his face, and, opening his mouth until all his other features seem to disappear in the capacious cavity, eliminates therefrom a loud "ar," a cry which his young pupils take up with equal gusto, if not with equal impressiveness. So they go through the whole alphabet, chanting in chorus every letter. This method of attaining a knowledge of the elements of learning has been handed down to the present time from the earliest ages of the country.

But the course of instruction pursued at the government school—which, as its name implies, is under the patronage and protection of the Indian Viceroyalty—soars higher. The branches of education taught, or attempted to be taught, are those in common use throughout the academies of England, divinity excepted; but an English child ten years old will show a more appreciative understanding of every subject than any of the students at our government academy. These latter will, indeed, if required, write you out, from memory, a problem of Euclid, or translate you a portion of Delectus; but the former production will be a mere hotch-potch of mathematical terms, unconnected by any shade of reasoning, and the latter will be a mass of nonsense, bearing no likeness whatever to the original.

The school-house, which, after leaving the village academy, we next visit, is a long low-roofed building, announcing itself by a large board placed above the coping of the roof, on which are painted the words, "Anglo-Vernacular Academy." It is pleasantly situated in its own grounds, the trees planted in which effectually shut out from the ardent students the disturbing sights and sounds of the work-a-day world. The pupils are a sickly-looking race, wearing on their bodies a great amount of clean white muslin, and on their faces very vacant, curious, or impertinent expressions.

Young Bengal is at best but a sickly, forced plant—a child whose limbs are still cramped with the weight of the chains of ignorance and superstition, which have so recently fallen from them, and whose intellect, having

at length discovered that its old beliefs are mere fables, is still dazed and dizzy with the overwhelming light of new truth. It has a certain precocity and adaptiveness to the state of things introduced by the English, which enables it to bear smoothly and with unruffled temper the yoke to which it has become subjected, and it has, too, a dreamy acquiescence in the new and advanced teachings of its rulers; but the precocity is the forwardness of a rude and inquisitive child, and the adaptability and the acquiescence are the result of a dull, mercury-engendered, opium-nurtured apathy. True progress has scarcely dawned as yet on the Bengalee mind; the sleep of foolish ages has scarcely been wiped from its eyes; but still the mind, though ignorant, is there, and in every urchin of the plains lie the germs of a shrewd and mighty nation.

The magistrate next attends a meeting. It is held in the schoolroom, and its object is to consider the means best to be employed to relieve the distress inflicted by the famine which is ravaging his district. My companion, offering me a seat by his side, takes the place reserved for him at the head of the table, around which are already seated our missionary and our police superintendent, besides many other local authorities and native gentlemen. While waiting for the arrival of still other influential persons, the magistrate exchanges salutations and courtesies with the assembled Europeans and natives. Many of the native gentlemen are arrayed in garments of costly and striking appearance, ornamented with gold and silver, and of exquisite pattern and workmanship; one gentleman has brought two of his little children with him: they are even more exquisitely dressed than their father, and look on at the proceedings with all the wondering gravity of childhood. They are both very pretty; their features are exquisitely shaped; and their large dark eyes, beaming with happiness and excitement, pale the duskiness of their skins, and make them almost fair by comparison. When every one has arrived, the proceedings, which are conducted in Bengalee, are opened by the magistrate, who, in a sensible and suitable speech, invites the attention and advice of his friends in connexion with the subject which has brought them together. A subscription is proposed by another native gentleman (the Europeans present being unable or unwilling to address the meeting) and a subscription-list is soon opened, and with every assurance of success.

Though a married man, the magistrate never appears in society with his wife; she, in accordance with the religion of her forefathers, passes her life in the seclusion of her chamber. His children, however, are being brought up under better auspices; for the magistrate's sons and daughters are being prepared by education and admixture with society, to take a more fitting position in the ranks of their fellow-creatures. Uninfluenced by prejudice, and completely free from the yoke of the

priesthood, which for many years has bound his countrymen, our magistrate has recognised the sphere which woman is fitted to fill, and in the persons of his daughters has bravely determined to restore to them their social rights. Unbigoted by a morbid love of country, he is cosmopolitan in all his ideas and affections, and can recognise in an Englishman a friend and a benefactor; though at the same time, judging all men by the one standard of mental worth, he bows not the knee at the shrine of any man's wealth or lineage. In him, too, an Englishman would perceive not a mere flatterer and place-seeker, but a friend and a companion, full of the same sympathies as himself, and capable of the same emotions.

Perhaps the magistrate is a man you would not have expected to find in such an out-of-the-way place; but as I have described him, so he is; and in him I see a sign, not only of the times, but also of the future, when India's children, educated by our help, shall throw off our yoke and form a government of their own, and when the violence and bloodshed of our conquest shall be expiated by the blessings of civilisation, planted and nurtured by our hands.

TOM BUTLER.

A BOY'S HERO. IN SIX CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER V. THE FUNERAL.

It would be hard upon me to give in detail the incidents of this most delightful of days. I could have gone on thus for a week, now in the back seat, now walking, now running, now inside. I only regretted the absence of Vixen the First, who would have run *under* the carriage the whole way, her red jaws open, and enjoying all far more than I did. The anecdotes and good things I heard were indescribable. But at last, about ten o'clock, when it had grown dusk, and Mr. John's lamps were blazing, throwing out a fierce glare on both sides, like two wicked eyes, the trees began to grow thick, and the plantations to cluster, and the road to grow more like a green lane. Mr. John set about looking round, and breaking into exclamations, "Modye, Modye! well, well!" which I assumed was regret, as certain memorials brought back the memory of the late owner. Here were cottages, and people standing at the doors, and here was a narrow five-barred gate open, through which we turned—the back avenue. We now went along smoothly, plunged into a yet darker avenue cut in a plantation, which wound round and round about, through whose trees we saw sparkling the lights of the house. "Modye, Modye! well, well!" again came from my companion. And now we came up, with a sweep and crunching

of gravel, to a great solid house, burly, strong, and massive, and full of many windows. The door was wide open, and a young man, that seemed to me all black, was coming out.

"Very, very kind of you, Uncle Jack, to come—very!"

The brave Tom was not in the least embarrassed to account for *his* sympathising presence; in fact, did it so well that the black gentleman said it was very good of *him*, and that he felt it exceedingly. I was a little hurt to find that no one seemed to think it good of *me* to come so far; and, though the captain whispered him, and evidently spoke about me, he merely said, "To be sure, to be sure; quite right."

There was a great hall, with hats on the table, and it seemed to me full of "grand" things; a billiard table, antlers, pictures, and innumerable doors, which led everywhere. "I'll show you your rooms, and then we can have dinner when you like," he said; a speech which still seemed to leave me out. Then we went up a large staircase, they talking in a low voice; "Poor Jenny bears up wonderful," I heard him say, "wonderfully on the whole. But tomorrow morning will be the pull." What pull could he mean? "Aye, aye!" said the captain. "I am an old horse myself, and can't expect to draw for ever." Then he asked "how was Bill," and Bill himself came in; a jolly young man with a very large red beard, his hands in his pockets; and a very limp old servant-man, whose head shook mysteriously, and who, I must say, was the only one who seemed to be really in grief. He was called "Old Dan."

Dinner was in the large dining-room, which, I recollect, had a large folding-screen near the door, all over the most diverting coloured caricatures. The meal began in a rather ghostly manner, though the guests sat down with alacrity, and the brave Tom, who had now got quite on the footing of a private relation, declared he could "eat oats like a horse." After the first course, the conversation grew almost cheerful, without any unpleasant reference to the deceased. As I said, "Old Dan" was the only one who seemed to feel the situation, and the man in the beard apologised for his neglect, saying "that these old fellows really revelled in funerals." I noticed that they spoke with infinite zest and satisfaction "of the way Lord Loveland had behaved," "such a friendly, considerate note," and who was going to post ten miles in the morning to attend the

ceremony. That "stuck-up fellow, Sir John," had just behaved as he always did, neither better nor worse: could not leave town, and all that. Many's the bottle he'd had at this house. Not a word of sending his carriage even. The captain said he always thought he had "the soul of a snipe;" and the brave Tom, who seemed to be now raised into an authority, said it seemed to him "damned low." The man with the beard said *that* was it: he began low and he'd end low. Then, in the same enjoyable way, they talked over "Dobbyn," who had "done everything nicely, capitally, and quietly." No fuss, you know. She, poor thing (and they motioned up to the ceiling), was for having Fulkens, of London, down, and doing it in the swell, reckless style, bring down his own men, and all that. ("Folly, folly," said the captain.) Ridiculous. Why, Dobbyn, here, has done it just as well, and for half the money. "I can make my own terms with him." Then they spoke of other arrangements. How well the dean had behaved; he had written in the handsomest way (here his letter was duly read out) to-day; "that their little differences were all buried in the grave, and that he would be glad to pay his last tribute of respect by officiating." "To tell you the truth," said our host, rubbing his hands, "nothing could have fallen out more nicely, for, really, to have that low beast of a Busby grunting out the service, would have spoiled everything. It was very, very nice of the dean; it will give quite an air, you know."

"I declare it was," said the captain, "delicate and handsome; and it will read well in the papers; a tip-top fellow like that."

"Indeed," said the other, secretly rubbing his hands under the table, "everything has fallen out in the nicest way."

That night I lay in a vast chamber in a vast bed, with old red chintz curtains, grown quite limp and soft. At one corner I had to raise my voice to address the captain, who was to occupy another vast four-post structure at the other side. He was quite in spirits, for he owned this was one of the best houses for old whisky in the country. I see him now bent over his portmanteau, laying out his brushes and razors for the morning, and talking pleasantly as he did so. "I wonder how it's going with the poor old boy up-stairs?"

Later, when he was getting into bed, he said: "Egad, I'll lose my way here, if I don't take care. Any way, these are *roomier quarters than the poor old Buck*

has got into now. An' God forgive me. Sure, I ought to be in grief, but by-and-by they'll be coming to measure Uncle Jack. Good night, my boy."

On the next morning I was up early. I heard the rooks, chief mourners, very noisy outside, and stole down. It was a very fine fresh morning, and I was in delight with the nobleness and grandeur of the place. The solid, vast old trees, the rich demesne, the noble openings, the grand old trunks, the sweet air, the general sense of dignity and magnificence—all this was new and even overpowering to me. No one was abroad save these early rooks, who might have known there was a funeral on foot. Then I got round by the back, towards where the gardens lay, with a high brick wall encircling them. The delight of that early walk I did not soon forget.

By the time I returned it was past eight o'clock, and I saw carriages winding up the avenue already; a crowd of peasants and beggars, for whom the day was a sort of festival, were beginning to be grouped about the door. Inside, it seemed to me, people were always going up and down stairs; but what most excited my curiosity and interest, was a florid man, very eager and busy, who was at work in the hall fitting long pieces of crape "on all the gentlemen's hats." The old retainers and Mr. John were equally busy and excited in collecting such of these articles as were absent from rooms upstairs. I noticed the nice anxiety of the florid man that no one should be left out or forgotten, and his evident trouble about two missing ones, which could not "be got, high or low," but now I trace this feeling to a mere natural professional anxiety. He had a box, too, of very clumsily-shaped black gloves, which looked as if they would fit no one, and no doubt did not. But for Mr. John the transformation was amazing. He was everywhere; but he had undertaken with delight the office, with assistance, of course, of fitting on every coachman and footman an almost massive white linen scarf and hat-band, of which grotesque gear a perfect pile lay on the hall table. The general alacrity and air of business was surprising. Every moment a carriage drove up, and, after due setting down of the owner, the ceremony of investiture of driver and footman was proceeded with. The guest, I noticed, always entered with a well-meant effort at solemnity on his face, which was quite thrown away on the audience. Every such arrival Mr. Dobbyn surveyed narrowly, or

rather his hat, doubtful whether he was down on his list for crape or gloves. The dean's shovel he seized on, actually before it was off that dignitary's head.

The host seemed to be always coming down-stairs in a reckless way. Would then go off laterally, and after an interval mysteriously come down-stairs again. There was a vast breakfast going on in the large dining-room, and every one, after their hats had been taken from them, was motioned in by one of Mr. Dobbyn's men. The solemn faces immediately cleared, and I must say such a hearty meal, such tremendous "cutting and coming again," the captain's phrase, such going to the side table, such hewing there, such crackling sounds of the division of bones and joints, I have never heard since. In the midst of which scene we saw the host fitting in now and again, and surveying us all uneasily. The family doctor and the local clergy and others, taking this for a sign of grief, would get rid of their mouthful as hastily as they could, and offer sympathy with a severe wring of the hand, and a "My dear friend" which I heard the host answer in the same mechanical way, with a "Ah, yes!" Then his eye wandered round again: "*Is Lord Loveland in here?*"

At last there was a great slow crunching on the gravel. We all looked up, and we all knew by an instinct that this was the fatal vehicle, which comes to the door of most of us, and gives us a ride in state at least once. From the window we could not see it, but we could note all faces turned in one direction. At the same moment my lord must have driven up, and the sounds of wheels became mingled; for the host was entering eagerly, with a sort of ship's figure-head, whom he held by the hand, to whom he was saying in a low voice, "Really, my lord, so kind, I shall never forget it." Every one, I saw, the country doctors, the clergy, had a sort of instinct to rise up and bow in homage; at least, every one moved on their chairs uneasily, as if that was the first prompting. His lordship would take nothing. Oh dear no, he said, except indeed a little *chasse* after his long ride. "To be sure, to be sure," and he was at once removed to the study, while in a moment the host passed through, leading the way for glasses and a case bottle.

Now the captain, and I, and brave Tom are out in the hall. Every one is looking for their hats, which are hard to find, so disguised are they. Dobbyn full of business

to the last hour, assisting the captain to a dismal cloak without folds, and of a shrunken curtailed simplicity, which hung close to the person. I did not stop then to think over how many despairing hearts and broken spirits, those rusty winding sheets for the living had been wrapped, and how they must have become charged, as it were, with all the agonies of bereavement. The captain, who had real heart and feeling—indeed, when I long after made acquaintance with Sterne's Captain Shandy, I found his correct likeness—always honestly said that he felt to his relations very much as he did to strangers; and that the friends he had made were more tender and kind to him than any blood relations in the world. So I did not think him unfeeling as I looked at him, with wonder, invested in his new uniform, his hat swathed in a cumbrous crape bandage, when he looked down at me, and whispered, with a twinkle in his eye, "Egad! they've made a guy of me at last, eh?" As for the bold Tom, he was hurrying about, a perfect friend of the family, carrying his black bandage, his face composed to an expression of sympathy, whispering now with Mr. Dobbyn, and now consulting with the host.

But now that dismal procession down the stairs, of which I have seen many patterns since, was taking place; which, indeed, then struck me with a sort of chill and awe. I recal distinctly the sort of scuffling and struggle as it came round corners, and the muttered and familiar directions of the overburdened men. Then every one was serious and impressed, and the women of the household, whom Mr. Dobbyn had taken care to encase in perfect mainsails of linen, began to weep and sob. Then came the mourning coaches, and the captain was seized on, borne off by Dobbyn, and shut in with three other gentlemen in a sort of jet-black cell. The brave Tom I really think secured a place in the second mourning coach. I know I saw him giving directions, his crape fluttering and tossing like a weeping willow, and the last thing I heard him say to the host was, "We can put Mr. Auchmuty in *our* chariot," a proposal received with a tumult of gratitude. Though considering I was next heir male to the green chariot, I might have been a little piqued at this disposal of the chattel, especially as I was rather curtly told I must stay behind. This was of course well meant. But, indeed, all through this momentous business I was quite passed over, almost contemptuously. However, I saw the procession wind off,

and for long after saw it far away, winding snake-like among the far-off trees, the great six-horse wain leading and nodding gloomily, Dobbyn's white linen flashing out grotesquely, as though the drivers were all jackdaws. The rooks made a prodigious commotion among themselves, and seemed to know that something mortuary and congenial was up, as indeed, the old servants about the place took pains to remark with much shaking of the head.

That was a curious morning for me. The house seemed to be deserted, every one having gone off. But they all came back very soon in a sort of rabble rout, pell-mell, and anyhow. Every one seemed eager to be off, and I noted there seemed to be a great weight off the host's mind. The chariot then came round, but we had not nearly so pleasant a journey back.

VI. TOM'S FINALE.

AFTER this Tom Butler became more and more regarded by the family. He was worth a dozen, said the captain, "of those fashionable skipjacks, who wouldn't just crook their little finger to save you from starving. A dozen—a thousand I should say." He was always doing some good-natured and useful service for the ladies. And he always contrived to succeed, not being one of those who came back, as the captain said again, "with their finger in their mouth." He was so amusing and such good company. At the same time stories would come to the family of strange acts of wildness, debts, bills, and what was known generally as "scrapes." These he would unfold at private interviews, from which I was summarily ordered out. They lasted for hours, and he submitted to being gravely lectured, and went away very grateful and quiet. At our more public table he was less reserved, and used to dwell loudly on "that tyrant Baker," "that Jack of a major, as miserable a little cur as ever put on uniform." He was again gently reprov'd and remonstrated with, yet in a sort of good-humoured toleration, as though the right were still on his side. He should restrain himself, it was for his interest, &c. But if we only knew what "a beast" that Baker was, what a low, overbearing, mean cub, that officers and men both hated, the very horses would have a kick at him if he gave them a chance. And who was he, after all, to be taking airs over gentlemen? Why, would we believe it, his father is an oil and pickle

fellow in the city, sells over the very counter! A nice chap to be set over gentlemen! The colonel is a gentleman, but he is nothing but a shopman. I doubt if these doctrines would be approved of coming from any other lips.

One day, however, comes the noble Tom with a proposal of the most startling and even dazzling nature. I must come and dine with him: see what the mess was like. This extraordinary proposal seemed really absurd, as wild and daring as going off to Australia in a clipper ship, and coming from another would have convulsed the house; but the brave Tom had the art of importing an air of easy feasibility to all his schemes. The gallant fellow could do what he liked. He would take care of me, send me home in a cab with his orderly sergeant, or come himself. There was but faint opposition. It was time, indeed, that the boy should begin to see something of men, it would rub him up a bit, and show him life. I had no objection, it may be well conceived. A sumptuous banquet, that involved rare wines and dishes, was what had not yet entered into the economy of my life. I had read of such things in the Scriptures, and in Roman history. The high-spirited Tom said that the enjoyment of the evening would be more unshackled, as "the oil and pickle fellow" would be away. "Gone to the shop," he supposed, and he was to be senior officer of the evening.

It was an exciting day. Dinner, habitually for me at five, was on this occasion at eight. Dressing, as usual, was a laborious and even painful operation, but I bore those vestimentary tortures cheerfully. The hour at last arrived, and, carefully admonished to keep a guard over myself as though all my eternal interests were at stake, as though I was habitually given to excess both in eating and drinking, and could not be trusted in sight of those dangerous seductions without falling, I was driven away in a cab.

Not without awe and nervousness did we turn into the archway of the barrack. It was the first time, also, I had been sent into the world, as the high-spirited Tom would say, "on my own hook." That hook I felt gradually bending away out of all shape under me, or in me. The soldier at the gate rose on his toes, looked in at me a little suspiciously, and said something to the cabman. The row of lights in the mess-room windows quite awed me, so did the lounging soldiers at the door. But the noble and gallant Tom, with careful forethought, was there to receive me, and led

me in through the ranks of glittering warriors, though up a rather dirty stone staircase, which did not correspond. "I made a mistake," he whispered, as we went up, his arm on my shoulder. "That pickle fellow is actually senior officer to-night, and the colonel is away. What a swell we are! 'Pon my word, a blue and silver waistcoat!" A kind compliment that almost made me blush.

Tom was in a loose open "shell jacket" that seemed the perfection of elegant ease and comfort. A number of officers, very noisy, were standing round, also in loose shell jackets; and by putting their hands deep in their pockets and throwing their jackets far back off their shoulders, they also seemed to convey the perfection of elegant ease. They were of all sizes, some, tall stout men with rusty moustaches; others, little round chubby men, while some seemed only two or three years older than I was. One, however, stood by himself, his back to the fire and one hand behind his back. He was reading a letter. A bald-headed, bloodless, pinch-lipped person, without any moustache. He looked, indeed, as the brave Tom said, as if he had turned all the blood he had into anchovy sauce for the shop, and a poor condiment it would make.

Tom led me in, and actually brought me up to this stiff being.

"Major Baker," he said boldly, "this is my friend and guest." The other read on, turned over the page, finished the sentence, and then looked up.

"What! this lad?"

"Why not?" said Tom, reddening; "we were once such a thing as a lad ourselves."

"You won't find me denying that, Captain Butler; though some people behave as lads all their lives."

Tom was going to reply, when some of the officers came round, and the burly one, whose chest stuck very much out of his jacket, stooped down and spoke to me, and asked, "was I going to be a soldier? I answered readily, no: that, unfortunately, it had been resolved I should go to the bar when I came to the proper age to be called. That it had been my own wish to follow their profession, but that it seemed wiser on the whole to choose the bar, owing to the chances of becoming Lord High Chancellor, or Judge, or Attorney-General. At this they said, "O, indeed," and seemed greatly interested. Seeing this, I would have enlarged much more on this subject, only some one announced dinner in a soft voice, and we all moved in.

Such a scene of splendour! such gold and silver, glass and flowers! I sat next to the noble Tom ("You are my guest, you know"), and close to the grim oil and pickle major. Tom explained everything to me. The four golden soldiers carrying a casket on their heads in the centre, was a "trophy" presented by a late colonel.

"Poor Stapleton," said Tom, raising his voice, and speaking across to Griffin, "as fine a fellow as ever stepped, and a true gentleman, who, let me tell you, are getting uncommon scarce. We didn't care for his bit of plate, though it cost him a thousand pounds; we missed his good nature and gentlemanly heart."

There was great adhesion to this sentiment, the stout man saying shortly, "devilish good fellow, Stapleton." Tom then pointed me out the Silver Tower, which the regiment had bought in India, and paid five hundred pounds for. An exquisite bit of native workmanship.

"An exquisite bit of useless extravagance," said the major, austere; "recollect I opposed it at the time. We haven't money to throw away on such gewgaws."

"Yes; you opposed it," said Tom, tossing off champagne. "I'll bear you out in that, Major Baker, you do *that* always."

"I said at the time," went on the major, coldly, "when you have got it you won't know what to do with it. And I was right; you, Captain Butler, were the main author of the scheme, and forced it on, and to this hour you can't tell what use it could be turned to."

"I think," the stout Griffin said, "it would be a very neat thing for Yorkshire pie in the morning at breakfast."

"Only the good bits would get all stuck in the towers. You're a precious one."

"No," said the major, coldly, "not half so much so as the original promoter of the scheme. Making it a dish for a pie is better than planning what could be of use to no mortal born."

The brave Tom Butler's cheeks were flaming, and, in a steady voice, he said, slowly, "I tell you what I think we could make of it—a handsome cruet-stand, with compartments for the pepper and pickles, and mustard and anchovies. It's the very thing."

Even I understood. There was a silence for a moment, but the good-natured fat man struck in, and changed the subject.

"The pleasure of a glass of champagne with you, Mr. Fitz-Carter," he said, bowing to me. I bowed to him in return. A

waiter flew with a glorified bottle, and allowed the ambrosial liquor to flow into my open-mouthed goblet. It was nectar, indeed. It was the first time, too, I had tasted it. Tom Butler and the major were looking at each other steadily. In a moment Tom whispered to me:

"I had him there, my friend; I think that shot holed him, went through him, shivered him like a bottle of Harvey's sauce. Well, I hope you are enjoying your dinner. I am getting into spirits again. Come, have a glass of champagne with me. These mess waiters, you know, are all soldiers; you see they have got moustaches, and that makes 'em so smart. That's my fellow, Bob, that filled your glass. Bob's worth his weight in gold, and would die for me. Old Baker, there, any one of the regiment would just shoot for sixpence."

This terrible state of things quite scared me, not merely the general tone of mind as to the projected assassination, but the small sum for which it was proposed to be executed. He told me many other details about this new world, which both amazed and delighted me. This narrative he punctuated, as it were, with many a glass, and rose every moment in spirits. He, however, owing to a promise he had made elsewhere, checked me after my second glass.

"My dear boy," he said, "just at first, you know. When you have made your head, then it will be all right."

After dinner we adjourned to the ante-room, where smoking and card-playing set in. Some of the stout men were really most good-natured to me, and seemed so anxious to know all about me, and listened so attentively, that I felt I could do no less than be as communicative as I could. So I told them all about myself, and who my tutor was, and what I was learning; and also the history of my first acquaintance abroad with Tom, and of his licking the Frenchman, of which glorious day I found the brave and modest fellow had never told them a word. I began at the beginning, and went on to the end. They were delighted and laughed, and the fat man hit his thigh, and said:

"It was Tom all over."

Alas! it was more like to be all over with Tom! For at that moment, as the words were spoken, up started from the end of the room two figures, and two loud and angry voices broke out. And there was one flaming face defying a very pale one.

"Go to your room, sir! I have you now, and will see what a court-martial will say to this."

"I don't care," said Tom, furiously. "I tell it to your face again. You are a tyrant, and the worst tyrant the men ever had."

"Hush, hush, Butler! you don't know what you are talking about," interposed good-natured voices.

"Yes, I do," said the undaunted Tom, making a frantic speech; "and I am glad it has come to this at last. Let us have a court-martial by all means, and see what that will bring out. Others can be tried by it too. Officers and gentlemen, indeed! What a mockery! Unless you are a gentleman you can't understand the acts of gentlemen."

"Go to your room at once," said the major—he seemed awful to me—"or shall I send for the guard?"

As Tom went down with me to the cab he was tremendously excited. "I am glad of it," he repeated very often, "that it has come to this. It must have come to it. I insulted him as hard as I could, and I am glad of it. It has been coming to it for a long, long time. But the ruffian has such influence, and I am so unlucky. You tell them at home I'll come and see them and tell 'em about it, if I can get out at all; on bail, or any way. God bless you, old fellow. You behaved like a trump, and Griffin says you were more amusing than many a grown-up man."

Within a fortnight Tom Butler was tried by court-martial, and within three weeks was sentenced to be dismissed the army, but, through "desperate interest," was allowed to sell his commission. He paid us a dismal visit. He was going to Australia, "a disgraced man," where, too, he never "did," and ended a stormy life very soon, and in a stormy way. But before he died he learned by an English paper that what he had prophesied for the oil and pickle Major Baker had actually come true, for that cold-blooded officer was one morning shot, when standing at his window at Colchester, by a brooding private soldier whom he had treated unjustly.

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WRECKED IN PORT.

A SERIAL STORY BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP."

BOOK III.

CHAPTER VIII. TOO LATE.

DR. OSBORNE'S opinion of Mr. Creswell's serious state, and the absolute necessity for the old gentleman's immediate withdrawal from everything calculated to cause worry or excitement, and consequently from the election, was soon promulgated through Brocksopp, and caused the greatest consternation amongst the supporters of the Tory policy. Mr. Teesdale was summoned at once to Woolgreaves, and there had a long interview with Mrs. Creswell, who convinced him—he had been somewhat incredulous at first, being a wary man of the world, and holding the principle that doubt and disbelief were on the whole the safest and most remunerative doctrines—that it was physically impossible for her husband to continue the contest. The interview took place in the large, carpeted, and furnished bow-window recess on the landing immediately outside the door of Mr. Creswell's room, and, as Mr. Teesdale afterwards remarked in conversation with Mr. Gould, whom he summoned by telegraph from London, there was no question of any malingering or shamming on the old gentleman's part, as he could be heard groaning, poor old boy, in a very lamentable manner, and Dr. Osborne, who called at the time, said his patient was by no means out of the wood yet. Mr. Teesdale's talk, professional as it was, was tinged with more sympathy and respect for the sufferer than were Mr. Gould's remarks. Mr. Teesdale had other relations in business with Mr. Creswell; he was his land agent and general business representative, *had known him intimately*

for years, and had experienced innumerable kindnesses at his hands; whereas, Mr. Gould had simply made Mr. Creswell's acquaintance in his capacity of Conservative candidates' dry-nurse, and Mr. Creswell was to him merely an errant and peccant nine-pin, which, from fate or its own shortcomings, it was impossible for him, skilful "setter-up" though he were, to put properly on end. He saw this after five minutes' conversation with his local representative, Mr. Teesdale, and saw that there was an end of his chance, so far as Brocksopp was concerned. "It won't do here, Teesdale," he said; "this finishes our business! It hasn't looked very promising throughout, but if this old character had gone to the poll, and specially if he had said one or two things you could have crammed him with on the nomination day, we might have pulled through! You see he's so eminently respectable; though he, of course, is not to be compared with this young chap that Potter and Fyfe's people have got hold of—and where they dug him up astonishes me! Newspaper office, eh? 'Gad, we haven't got much of that sort of stuff in the newspaper offices of our party—however, though the old gentleman couldn't hold a candle to this young Joyce, I'm not sure that we couldn't have got him in. They'd have had the show of hands and the hurray and all that, but we know how much that's worth, and what with Sir George Neal's people and our own, we could have run him deuced close, even if we didn't win. Nuisance it is, too, for he's kept us from running anybody else. There was young Clare, Sir Willis Clare's eldest son, was up in Pall Mall the other day, ready to go in for anything, and with rather a hankering for this place, which his father sat for once; but I said we were booked, and now—confound it!"

Mr. Teesdale was scarcely less upset. He talked vaguely of getting Mr. Creswell's consent, so soon as he was sufficiently recovered to be able to entertain the topic, to the substitution of some good Conservative candidate in his place; but Mr. Gould treated this proposition with a scornful laugh, and told him that they would have had to do all they knew to pull Mr. Creswell through, and that to attempt to run anybody else at that late period would be madness. So a private meeting of the principal supporters of the party was held at the Lion, and Mr. Gould—who had run up to London in the interim, and had an interview with the chief wire-pullers—announced that in consequence of Mr. Creswell's unfortunate illness, it had been decided to withdraw him from the candidature, and, as there was no prospect of success for any one else who might be started in the same interest, to refrain from contesting the borough at this election. This announcement was received in dead silence, broken by Mr. Croke's frank and outspoken denunciation of the cowardice, the "trem'lousness," the "not to put too foin a pint upon it, the funk" which seemed to have seized upon some as "owt t' knaw better!" The meeting was held in the evening, most of the company present had steaming glasses of grog before them, and Mr. Croke's outspoken oratory elicited a vast amount of applause and knocking on the tables with the stalwart feet of the tumblers. A young farmer of the neighbourhood, popular from his openhandedness and his skill in rifle-shooting—he was champion badge-holder in the local volunteers—rose and suggested that any such abject surrender as that proposed was ill-advised and inexpedient, and sat down, after finishing a long rambling speech, the purport of which was that some one should be put forward to fill the gap created by Mr. Creswell's lamented but unavoidable illness. That the gap should be filled, seemed to be a popular idea; but each of the ten or twelve speakers who subsequently addressed the meeting had different people for the post: and it was not until Mr. Teesdale pointed out the utter futility of attempting to begin the fight anew under a fresh banner, confessing that they would have had very great difficulty in bringing matters to a successful issue even with all the prestige of Mr. Creswell's name and position, that it seemed to dawn upon the meeting that their chance was hopeless. *This had been told them at the outset by*

Mr. Gould; but he was from London, and, consequently, in the ideas of the farmers present, steeped in duplicity of every kind, and labouring under an impossibility of truth-speaking. Mr. Teesdale had infinitely more weight with his audience. They knew him as a man whose word was to be relied on, and the impossibility of doing anything beyond swallowing the bitter pill was acknowledged among them from that moment. True, that the pill was so bitter as to require the consumption of an extraordinary amount of brandy-and-water to get it down, a fact which helped to console old Tilley, the landlord, for the shock to his political principles. It is to be noted, also, that after the withdrawal of Messrs. Gould and Teesdale, the meeting gave itself up to harmony of a lugubrious character, and dismal ditties, mixed with fierce denunciations of democrats and reformers, were borne away on the still night air.

So, within a day or two, the walls of Brocksopp were covered with placards signed in Mr. Creswell's name, setting forth the sad cause which prevented him from further exertion in the interests of freedom and purity of election, lamenting the impossibility of being able conscientiously to recommend a proper candidate to the constituency at so short a notice, but bidding the electors not to despair so long as there remained to them a House of Lords and an omniscient aristocracy. This document, which was the production of Mr. Teesdale (Mr. Gould had been called away to superintend certain other strongholds where the fortifications showed signs of crumbling), was supplemented by the copy of a medical certificate from Dr. Osborne, which stated that Mr. Creswell's condition was such as to imperatively demand the utmost quietude, and that any such excitement as that to be caused by entering on an election contest would probably cost him his life.

The news was already known at the enemy's head-quarters. On the morning after the meeting at the Lion, Mr. Harrington, who had been duly informed of all that had taken place by a spy in whom he could place implicit confidence, walked over to Shuttleworth, the nearest telegraphic station, and thence despatched the following enigmatic message to his firm: "Brocksopp Stakes. Old Horse broken down in training. Our Colt will walk over." It happened that Mr. Potter was alone when this telegram arrived, and to him it was utterly

unintelligible; but Mr. Fyfe, who came in shortly afterwards, and who was acquainted with and tolerant of the vagaries of his clerk's intellect, soon guessed at the situation, and explained it to his partner. So it fell out that the election for Brock-sopp, which had attracted attention even amongst great people in the political world, and which was looked forward to with intense interest in the neighbourhood, passed off in the quietest and tamest manner. The mere fact of the knowledge that there was to be no opposition, no contest, robbed the nomination day of all its interest to hundreds of farmers in outlying places, who did not care to give up a day's work when there was to be no "scrimmage" as a requital for their sacrifice of time; and the affair was consequently thoroughly orderly and commonplace. There were comparatively few persons present, and five minutes after Joyce's speech, in which he returned thanks for the honour done to him, and alluded with much nice feeling to his late opponent's illness, had concluded, the market square was deserted, and the clumsy hustings remained the sole memorial of the event to which so many had looked forward for so long.

Jack Byrne was horribly disgusted at the tame manner in which the victory had been won. The old man's life had been passed in the arena: he was never so happy as when he or some of his chosen friends were on the verge of conflict; and to see the sponge thrown up, when the boy whom he had trained with so much care, and on whom he placed every dependence, was about to meet with a foeman worthy of his steel, who would take an immense deal of beating, and whom it would be a signal honour to vanquish, annoyed the old free lance beyond measure. It was only by constantly repeating to himself that his boy, his Walter, whom he had picked up starving and friendless at Blifkins's coffee-house, was now a member of parliament, with the opportunity of uttering in the British senate those doctrines which he had so often thundered forth amidst the vociferous applause of the club, those opinions with which he, old Jack Byrne, had indoctrinated him, that he was able to perceive that, although without any grand blaze of triumph, a great result had been achieved. Mr. Harrington, too, was by no means pleased that all his jockeyship should have been thrown away on so tame an event. He admitted

as much to Mr. South, the local agent, who was mildly rejoicing in the bloodless victory, and who was grateful for the accident by which success had been secured. Mr. Harrington entirely dissented from this view of the case. "I call it hard," he said, "deuced hard, that when I had reduced the thing to a moral, when I had made all arrangements for a waiting race, letting the other side go ahead, as I knew they would, making the running like mad, and getting pumped before the distance; we waiting on them quietly, and then just at the last coming with a rush, and beating them on the post, I say it is deuced hard when a fellow has given all his time and brains to arranging this, to find he's reduced to a mere w. o. To be sure, as you say, one collars the stakes all the same, but still, it ain't sport!"

There was one person, however, to whom the knowledge that the election had gone off flatly was delightful—Marian Creswell. As she had stood that night in her dressing-gown, with her dishevelled hair hanging over her shoulders, listening to Dr. Osborne's verdict on her husband's state, she had seen in his strongly pronounced opinion a safe, plausible, and immediate chance of escape from that most dreaded defeat by Walter Joyce at the election; and though she had apparently received the decision with deepest regret, she was inwardly delighted. At all events, there would be no absolute victory. Walter Joyce could not go away and tell his friends in the great world in London that he had defeated his adversary. No one could say what might have been the issue of the contest had Mr. Creswell's health not given way, and Marian was perfectly confident that Walter's chivalrous nature would prevent his ever mentioning to any one the interview which had taken place between him and her, or what passed thereat. On the whole, it was the best thing that could have happened for her. She had for some time foreseen that there was no chance of establishing herself in society through the election as she had once hoped, and anything would be better than that she should suffer defeat—absolute defeat—in a matter which she had so nearly at heart.

Anything? her husband's illness, dangerous illness, for instance? Yes; anything. She had never pretended to herself that she had loved Mr. Creswell. She had done her duty by him strictly, even to casting out all thoughts, all remembrance, of

the lover of her youth; and it is an odd and not a very gratifying sign of the weakness of the human heart to think that Marian had frequently taken credit to herself for the sense of wifely duty which had induced her to eliminate all memories of early days, and all recollections of Walter Joyce, from her mind. Her husband was very much her senior; she could not have hoped that he would live very long, and if he were to be removed——. There was, however, no question of that at present. Within a few days of the attack to which Dr. Osborne had been called, Mr. Creswell had recovered consciousness, and gradually had so far mended as to be able to take interest in what was passing round him. One of his first expressed wishes was to see Mr. Benthall, and when that gentleman, who was very much touched by the sight of the old man's altered expression, and wandering eyes, and strange twitching face, was left alone with him, he asked hurriedly, but earnestly, for news of the girls, his nieces, and seemed much relieved when he heard they were well and happy. To Marian her husband's manner was wonderfully altered. He was kind always, occasionally affectionate, but he seemed to have lost all that utter trust, that reliant worship, which had so characterised his attentions to her in the early days of their marriage. Of the election he spoke freely, expressing his sorrow for the disappointment which his friends would suffer owing to his forced defection, and his pleasure that, since a representative of opposite politics must necessarily be chosen, the town would have the advantage of returning a man with the high character which he had heard on all sides ascribed to Mr. Joyce. When, on the evening of the nomination day, Mr. Teesdale waited on his chief, and detailed to him all that had taken place, dwelling on the mention which Joyce had made of his absent opponent, and the high opinion which he had expressed of him, the old gentleman was very much moved, and sank back on his pillows perfectly overcome. Marian by no means appreciated Mr. Teesdale that evening, and got rid of him as soon as possible. She was much pained at the display of what she considered her husband's weakness, and determined on following Dr. Osborne's advice as to removing him as soon as he was able to travel. It was noted just at that time that Mrs. Creswell spoke far more favourably of her husband's state of health than she had

done for some time previously, and betrayed an unmistakable desire to get him away from Brocksopp neighbourhood and influences without delay.

When Dr. Osborne was consulted on the matter, he said that as the election, which was the greatest risk of excitement for his patient, had now passed by, it would depend greatly on Mr. Creswell's own feelings and wishes as to whether he should leave his home. A change would most probably be beneficial; but the doctor knew that his old friend had always been wedded to his home, and had a great aversion to being away from it when no absolute necessity for his absence existed. However, Mr. Creswell, when appealed to, seemed to have lost any vivid interest in this as in all other matters of his life. He answered, mechanically, that he would do just as they thought best, that he had no feeling one way or the other about it, only let them decide. He said this in the wearied tone which had now become habitual to him; and he looked at them with dim, lustreless eyes, out of which all expression seemed to have faded. Dr. Osborne tried to rouse him, but with such little success that he began to think Mr. Creswell's malady must have made rapid progress, and he took an early opportunity of submitting him to another examination.

Marian was not aware of this. She met the doctor coming out of her husband's room. They were on semi-friendly terms now, and she said to him:

"I was coming to you, doctor, this afternoon. I have just settled to take Mr. Creswell away for a few weeks, but of course I wanted you to see him before he went. And now you have seen him?"

"Yes; I have just left him."

"And what do you say?"

"I say that he must not be moved, Mrs. Creswell; that he must remain here at home, with every comfort that he may require, and that he must be carefully watched and tended by us all."

"Do you find him changed—for the worse? I thought myself that I had noticed during the last few days—Do you apprehend any immediate danger?"

"He is very much changed for the worse; the disease has made great progress, and if he were suddenly disturbed or excited I would not answer for the consequences."

"I did right, then, in refusing Mr. Teesdale access to him, yesterday. There is some disputed election account, and Mr.

Teesdale was most urgent to see Mr. Creswell, but I thought it better to prevent him."

"You did perfectly right; he must be denied to everybody save those immediately around him, and all matters of business, and anything likely to excite or worry him in the least, must be studiously kept from him."

They were descending the stairs as the doctor spoke, and in the hall they found Mr. Teesdale, who had just ridden up in hot haste, and was parleying with one of the servants. He took off his hat when he saw Mrs. Creswell and the doctor, and was about to speak, but Marian was before him—"I hope you are not again wishing to see my husband, Mr. Teesdale, as I shall be compelled again to refuse you! Dr. Osborne here will tell you that I am acting in accordance with his strict orders." And the doctor then repeated to the agent all that he had just said to Marian.

"It's an uncommonly vexatious thing," said Mr. Teesdale, when the doctor had concluded: "of course it can't be helped, and whatever you say must be attended to, but it's horribly annoying."

"What is it?" asked Dr. Osborne.

"A matter of Ramsay's, that truculent brute of a fellow who holds the White Farm down Helmingham way. He's made a claim that I know the chief wouldn't acknowledge, and that consequently I daren't pay; though, knowing the fellow as I do, I'm not sure it wouldn't be safest and best in the long run."

"Why don't you act on your own responsibility, then?"

"Not I. The chief had a throw-up with this man before, and declared he would never give in to him again. He's an ill-conditioned scoundrel, and vows all kind of vengeance if he isn't paid."

"My good friend," said the doctor, "you and I know pretty well that Mr. Creswell is able to laugh at the threatened vengeance of a person like this Mr. Ramsay. I must not have my patient disturbed for any such matters. Carry on the business yourself, Teesdale. I know what trust Mr. Creswell places in you, and I know how well it is deserved."

"Then I shall tell Mr. Ramsay to go to—"

"Exactly," said the doctor, interrupting. "You could not consign him to more fitting company."

On the evening of the second day from this colloquy, *Marian returned from a long*

drive in her pony carriage, during which her thoughts had been of anything but a cheerful character. She had been suffering from that horrible sinking of heart which comes sometimes, we know not why, bringing with it the impression that something, we know not what, save that it is unpleasant, is impending over us. When she alighted, she inquired whether Mr. Creswell had rung for anything, and whether Dr. Osborne had called, and received answers in the negative in both cases. A letter marked "immediate" had come for master, that was all. A letter! Where was it? Mr. Barlow, the butler, had taken it up to master's room, the valet being out. Marian heard of the arrival of this letter with a strange sense of fear, and hurried up to her husband's room.

She entered noiselessly and advanced quickly to the bed. Mr. Creswell was lying back, his hands clasped in front of him, his eyes closed, his face very grey and rigid. She thought at first that he was dead, and half screamed and called him by his name, but then, without speaking, without looking, he unclasped his hands, pointed to a folded paper on the coverlet, and then resumed his former position. The letter! She took it up and read it eagerly. It was dated from the White Farm, and signed John Ramsay. It commenced with setting forth his claims to money which was due to him, and which he knew would have been paid "had the squire been about," and it proceeded to revile Mr. Teesdale, and to declare that he was robbing his employer, and "feathering his own nest." The last paragraph ran thus:

"And you must be sharp and get about again, squire, and look to your own. You are bamboozled and cheated in every way right under your nose, in your own house, by your own wife. Why it's common talk in the town how you was done in the election by Mrs. C. She had young Joyce for a sweetheart long before she knew you, when he was a school usher, and gave him the sack and threw him over when she wanted you and your money, which she always hankered after, and took on with him again when she saw him down here, and got that old thief Osborne, which overcharges the poor for his beastly drugs, to square it and keep you out of the fun."

As Marian read and re-read this paragraph she turned sick at heart and thought she should have fainted, but was recalled to herself by a cold clammy touch on her wrist, and looking down she saw her

husband's eyes open and his lips moving. Standing over him she heard him say—"Is it true?"

"True! how can you ask me such a question! I swear it is not."

"No, no, not the last part of course! but any of it, that young man—was he fond of you—were you engaged?"

A bright flush suffused her face, but she answered steadily, "We were."

"And what made you break with him? Why did you quarrel? You don't answer. Is the letter right? Did you give him up for me? Did you let my position, my money, weigh more with you than his love and his heart? Did you do this?"

"And suppose I did—what then?" said Marian, with flashing eyes—"are you here to plead his cause? Have I not been a dutiful and a proper wife to you? You yourself have just spoken of this vile slander with the scorn it deserves! Of what then do you complain?"

"Of nothing. I complain of nothing, save perhaps of your ignorance of me! Ah, good Heavens! did you know me so little as to think that your happiness was not my aim, not so much my own! Did you not know that my love for you was so little selfish, that if I had had the least dream of your engagement to this young man, I should have taken such delight in forwarding it and providing for you both. You would have been near me still, you would have been a daughter to me, and—Lift me up! the cordial—quick!" and he fell back in a faint.

Dr. Osborne was sent for, and came at once, but it was plain to all that Mr. Creswell's end was at hand. He had two severe paroxysms of pain, and then lay perfectly still and tranquil. Marian was sitting by his bedside, and in the middle of the night she felt his hand plucking at the sleeve of her gown. She roused herself and looked at him. His eyes were open, and there was a bright, happy expression on his thin face. His mind was wandering far away, back to the early days of his poverty and his struggles, and she who had shared both was with him. He pulled Marian to him, and she leaned eagerly forward; but it was not of her he was thinking. "Jenny!" he said, and his tongue reverted to the old familiar dialect which it had not used for so many years—"Jenny! coom away, lass! Taim's oop!—that's t' mill bell ringin'! Thou'rt a brave lass, and we've had hard taim of it; but we're near t'

end now! Kiss me, Jenny! Always good and brave, lass—always—" And so he died.

ENGLISH HOP GARDENS.

ALONG the valley of the Medway, between Tunbridge and Maidstone, through Tunbridge Wells by way of Frant, Wadhurst, Ticehurst, and Mayfield, to Battle and Rye, one traverses the principal hop districts of Kent and Sussex. It is part of the geological formation which passes from Hastings to Tunbridge Wells, and rises in lofty hills at Crowborough in Ashdown forest. The hills are irregular and tossed about in all directions, for the earth's surface was the scene of strange vagaries before it settled to its present form. The district is as mixed in soil as in outline. Much of the land is very good, especially among the hops. In the midst of the rich farming of Kent one remembers with pleasure Cobbett's love of rural pursuits, his attachment to his Indian corn and his bonnet-grass, and his hatred of the potato, that "soul-debasing root." Attracted by a creeper with a very handsome blossom, growing over some houses in the main street of Tunbridge, I inquired its name. The name was lost, but the plants, I was told, had been brought there by William Cobbett.

Around Tunbridge there are various little streams and brooks running into the Medway; among these, the hops are found. Following the river towards its source, through Hartfield to East Grinstead, where it is but a little brook, I find that hops still choose to grow on, or near, its banks. From Tunbridge to Maidstone—fourteen miles—through Hadlow, Peckham, Mereworth, Watlington, Teston, and Barming, there are hops and orchards all the way. The prettiest orchards are those in which rows of apple-trees are mixed with filberts, cherries, and other low-growing trees. Filberts and cob-nuts do not want so much sun as the larger fruits; they need shelter, and they do not suffer from a little shade. The apple-trees, therefore, are planted wide apart, as tall standards, and are allowed to grow to a considerable height; under them, grow smaller trees, filberts, cherries, plums, damsons, and sometimes currants and gooseberries. The lower trees are kept small, and the filberts are pruned as bushes. They are all planted in rows, but a mixed orchard in full bearing looks like one mass of foliage and fruit. Inside, it is a busy scene. The orchards are often secluded within high hedges and close gates, and when picking is going on a merry humming is heard from within. The cost of picking a good crop of apples is from twopence to threepence a bushel. They are sent to London in bushel and half-bushel baskets (sieves). These belong to the salesman, who often sells and delivers the fruit, without unpacking it. Very few pears are seen in Kent; they prefer stiffer soils; the apple-tree delights in land

neither stiff, nor heavy, but good, dry, and deep. Some writers have recommended mere miniature trees, bushes, pyramids, and cordons, which can be kept small by occasionally lifting them, and by summer pruning. These are very interesting toys for those who have a taste that way, and very fine fruit can be so grown by gardeners who understand the culture. But in growing fruit for market there must be economy of labour and space; there must be no fancy work. These little trees are only one story high, whereas the apple-trees of Kent are five or six stories high, and produce five or six times as many apples, on an equal space, besides leaving room for a harvest of filberts and cherries beneath.

From the toll-gate at Maidstone I looked, on a fine August day, down the famous valley. Great billowy clouds were rolling about the sky. The forests of hops were seen in lights and shadows that changed every moment; and these contrasts, with the well-known effect of a rainy atmosphere, made the grounds, far and near, wonderfully distinct. In the course of this natural illumination I could see, throughout the green "forest," numerous patches tinged with red. These patches were the prey of the "red spider:" a disease, which sometimes destroys the hops, causing every leaf to curl up as if scorched by a fire-blast. I saw hop gardens, in which the blasted leaves had all dropped off, leaving the poles with the naked bine on them. If the attack be early, the leaves and laterals push again, and some hops may be grown. Signs of the presence of red spider cause great alarm, even when the pest appears in its mildest form. The Borough market becomes agitated, and hops rise in price. A heavy rain falls, great improvement is reported, and then hops go down! This troublesome parasite is analogous to that which attacks vines, cucumbers, and melons; and it generally makes its appearance in very dry weather. If hop growers could repeal the red spider, as they did the duty, they would be happy men; there would then ONLY be blight, fly, mould, mildew, wind, season, and foreign growers to contend against.

The immediate effect of the repeal of the hop duty was a rise of price, until the foreign growers could plant their ground and learn the art of hop growing, which they have now accomplished. The permanent effects are the enormous increase of supply and a consequent reduction of price.

Trudging up hill from Fairleigh I fell in with a man tall, upright, and in full vigour, at sixty-five. He carried a basket of fish, caught in the Medway since three that morning. No one, I afterwards found, could fill a basket quicker than this old angler, and he could do most things well that depended upon skill of eye and hand. This man is a labourer, whose abilities have raised him to the position of a sort of professional man. He can prune a fruit-tree, dress the hops, tally at picking, thatch a stack, make a hurdle, and do whatever rustic labour is the most in demand and the best paid. As his services are

always in demand, he is not bound down to one employer. When the hops are safe in pocket, he forsakes the fields for the garden. His winter master is the owner of a green-house, and for several months Dick is busy with the geraniums and on the lawn among the shrubs. While people of less perception would puzzle over the meaning of botanical terms, he, without knowing the words, has discovered some of the subtleties they express. It was interesting to hear Dick, as we walked on together, describe his experiments in raising new varieties of potatoes, or grafting several varieties of geraniums on one stem. That last is a simple operation to an adroit hand; but there is great wonderment at the Waggon and Team, where neighbours meet to smoke a friendly pipe and settle the hop-crop, when Dick produces his geranium, with scarlet Tom Thumb, white Madam Vaucher, and Rose Superb, all blooming on one stem. The potato seed is sown in his winter master's green-house. The tubers are as big as walnuts by Christmas; these are sown out of doors in the spring, and thus the new variety is obtained and a year saved. Plants renewed by cuttings or grafts—as the vine, apple, or potato—become weak sooner or later. Renewal by seed produces a new individual, with renewed strength; but the cutting, or graft, is only a slice of the old stock. "How's ever," says Dick: "you are not going to keep your new sort to yourself in Kent! If anybody has a good thing, it will be sure to spread. It may be in my garden this year, but it will be in everybody's next year. And they are right. A good thing should do good to us all. When the 'golden tipped' hops were first raised, the grower meant to keep them to himself; but a small slip of hop will grow," says Dick, with a wink, "and sure enough, they hops will grow all over the county in a year or two!"

My companion agreed to be my guide through eight or nine miles of orchards and hops, by Cox Heath, over the hill to Hunton, and to Yalding railway station. Presently we met a young woman, his niece, with a letter for the post. This Dick took into his hand to see that all was right, and detecting a flaw, said: "How can Ampstead spell Hampstead?" The maiden departed with strict injunctions to insert a capital H, and a good one. If an intellectual man be one who delights to cultivate his mind, and prefers that to the pleasure of sense, Dick is an intellectual man. His face shows it. The three prominent features, nose, chin, and forehead, are cast in nature's best mould. The Bible and a few other books have formed Dick's sole reading, but it is astonishing how cultivated his mind is. His daily labour, not too severe, has been amidst the works of nature, and an acute and superior mind has found in them materials for observation and reflection. Dick is clear-headed and a fluent talker, expressing himself in forcible language. A jumble of words without meaning could never come from his lips, because he has had to form his own ideas, and, having shaped out his own thoughts it

would be strange if he could not tell us what they are.

We reach Dick's cottage. His "dame" is busy in the garden. He points her out with pride, and describes her as the most industrious of women, and the best of housewives. He was a widower when he married Doll, his present helpmate, twelve years ago. It was at hop-picking time, and she was the best of the pickers. Dick was foreman of the work. It was not the first season he had "minded" her. But this time, when the work was over, Dick minded her in another sense, and asked whether she would return home with the others, or stay in the country with him? So she and her friends came to sup at Dick's house. Dick had boiled a plum-pudding beforehand. Doll cooked the steaks and potatoes, and Doll has cooked Dick's steaks and potatoes ever since. The cottage is his freehold, standing in a bright and cheerful spot, and he says there is not a man in the three kingdoms happier than he is. So he thinks, and so it must be, since "there's nothing good, or bad, but thinking makes it so."

We now reach that part of the road which passes, by a deep cutting, through the crest of the hill; on reaching the spot where the road passes straight down the opposite side of the hill, a beautiful and extensive view of the Weald of Kent comes suddenly upon us. The hill we have just passed consists of the famous Kentish rag, which forms the subsoil of one of the richest tracts in England. There are four soils: the rag, brick-earth, hassock sand, and "red pin," the last an irony earth comparatively poor; the sand is tolerable, but has too much sand and too little of other things in it. But the rag and brick-earth are splendid. The rag is a dark grey sandstone containing clay and (I suppose), the phosphates, silicates, and all other good things. The soil formed from it is never wet, because the fissures in the rock below, allow the water to escape. I passed through a fine hop-garden at Cox Heath, where the ragstones might have been gathered from the surface with a shovel. But usually this soil and the brick-earth are of great depth; there is no fear of breaking the staple; the deeper the soil is ploughed, the deeper and richer the seed-bed will be. But many are the soils—especially chalks, gravels, and poor clays—where the staple must not be broken, and the soil can only be deepened and improved by very slow degrees. It will take two lives and constant manuring to give some soils six inches of depth, and here the same may be got in two years without manure. The rags of Kent mean riches.

Behind a hill, near Battle, I passed under a railway arch and came to a hop-garden, containing what was said to be the finest crop of the year in England. I saw none to compare with it in Kent and Sussex. There were three poles to a hill. The poles bent with the heavy weight of flowers which hung in festoons from pole to pole, and from hill to hill. The tender shoots of bine crossed every path with *their fragrant* load of hops, so delicate and *graceful* that the clumsiest rustic passed through

it gently. This hop is the sort called Jones's; and as it grew in a damp bottom with a brook running through it, and an osier bed close by, it had withstood excessive drought. The flower was very large. In the same garden was a piece of that beautiful, late, long, square, four-sided hop, the colgate.

This is the way to estimate a crop. At two yards apart from hill to hill, the number of hills to an acre is one thousand two hundred and ten. A bushel of dried hops, of average quality, weighs a pound and a half. Therefore a bushel to a hill weighs sixteen hundredweight an acre, and this is a great crop, though even this has been greatly exceeded. The average growth of the kingdom between 1840 and 1849 inclusive was six and a half hundredweight to the acre, as appears by the amount of duty paid. The ground covered with hops in England, now sixty-four thousand acres, has increased in quantity by one half in the last ten years. In Kent, the space taken for hops, now forty-one thousand acres, has nearly doubled; in Sussex, it remains at about ten thousand. Meanwhile the duty on importation and the excise duty on English-grown hops have both been repealed, and the growth of hops abroad has been greatly encouraged. In Bavaria, there is a finer climate than in Kent, and a nobler river than the Medway. The plains of the Danube, are perhaps unrivalled for fertility. Kentish labourers were sent out in 1863 to show German farmers the English system of hop cultivation, especially the process of drying and preparing for market. The result is, that some of the best flavoured hops used for our bitter beer, come from Bavaria. France, Germany, Belgium, Poland, and America, compete with the home grower. Hops therefore must find their level in price. They must be cultivated only on the soils best suited for them; and in all probability, the acreage of English hopgrounds, which increased so greatly under the sudden stimulus of the repeal, will be reduced.

Hops were first introduced from Flanders in 1525, and soon afterwards there was a petition to parliament against their use in beer, on the ground that the hop was "a wicked weed that would spoil the taste of the drink, and endanger the people." Our annual consumption is now about five hundred thousand hundredweight a year; and within the next ten years the repeal of the malt tax and the increase of the population will probably double it. Thus, hop-growing has room for expansion; and whatever happens, it must always be a favourite pursuit: interesting as regards the cultivation and the details of management: fascinating because of the speculative nature of the trade. The crop ranges from nothing up to twenty hundredweight per acre, and the price is almost as variable. Nothing per hundredweight may easily be realised, by overstanding the market till the hops become old; for every year they degenerate in quality. The very high prices of former times are hardly likely to return, now that the area of growth is so widened. But the range is still

considerable. In 'sixty-seven the early sellers made ten guineas per hundredweight, but the price rapidly fell to five pounds, and later sales were made at three pounds. Two hundred pounds per acre would be the return from one garden; and over the hedge, or across the river, twenty or twenty-five pounds—less than the cost of cultivation. These contrasts often occur, and constitute the excitement of hop-growing—but it is a lottery in which the good farmer must win in the end, and in which skill, though it may now and then be baffled, is in the long run well rewarded.

SEALS.

THERE are about thirty species of seals at present known to naturalists; but of these not one half are "fur seals." The "hair seals" are, however, hunted for their blubber and hides, out of which leather is made; they are only found in northern latitudes, while the fur seals are confined to the southern regions and to the North Pacific: no species yielding valuable fur skins being found in the Atlantic, or on the shores of the Northern hemisphere. There are, therefore, a Northern and a Southern seal fishery, so called; but in reality the seal, though living in the sea so far as is necessary to obtain its food, is not a fish, but a warm-blooded sucking animal, belonging to the order Pinnipedia, or oar-footed mammals, and passes the greater portion of its time sleeping on the shore or on the ice-fields. The seals also inhabit the southern coasts of Europe and the British islands; but it is only in high northern latitudes, among the ice-fields of Newfoundland, Spitzbergen, and Greenland, that they are found in sufficient quantities to render their pursuit profitable. In the Spitzbergen, or, as it is sometimes erroneously called, the "Greenland seal fishery," the seals which form the quarry of the sealer are chiefly four species—the ground seal; the saddleback, or harp seal, from the saddle or harp-shaped marking on the backs of the adult male; the bladder-nosed seal, or klappmütz of the Continental sealers, so called from the inflated bladder or cap on its forehead; and the floe rat, the smallest species of seal in the Arctic seas. Spring is the time when the pursuit of these seals is followed, because at that time the seals assemble in incredible numbers on the great ice-floes, which have not as yet broken up in the Arctic seas, to produce their young. The young of the seal is generally of a creamy coloured white, and is particularly fat, and his skin, though small, is covered with a thick coating of hair. For fourteen or twenty days after birth they are unable to swim; and it often happens that seals of this age are blown off the floes by the spring gales, and drowned. The sealer, therefore, endeavours to reach the North Sea before they have taken the water; for then the helpless young fall an easy prey to the hunters.

Now-a-days there are few whalers sailing

from British ports, and most of these are steamers belonging to Dundee, Hull, Kirkcaldy, Peterhead, or Aberdeen. Nearly all of these vessels, since the failure of the whale fishery on the east side of Davis Strait (to which inlet whaling is now almost entirely confined), make a preliminary trip to the seal fishery; and those vessels which pursue the Spitzbergen whaling do so as a matter of necessity, because they are unable to penetrate to the more northern haunts of the whale until the ice barrier breaks up later in the season. There are also a number of German, Norwegian, and Dutch ships engaged in the seal fishery; all being comprehended by the non-political British seamen under the generic name of "Dutchmen." The French had at one time a few ships; but of late years they have abandoned the enterprise. The "Dutchmen" sail directly for the "sealing ground;" but the British ships rendezvous towards the end of February and the first days of March, in Bressa Sound, off Lerwick, in Shetland, the most northern town in Her Majesty's dominions. As most of the seamen are drunk before starting, this halt is looked upon as a convenient stoppage to put all in order before encountering the tempestuous North Sea. Here are bought fresh stores of fish, fowls, and eggs at a very low price, vegetables, leather "sealing caps," and the numerous articles of Shetland hosiery, comforters, mits, guernseys, &c. Here also arrive from the Nor' Isles stalwart fellows, with very big sea-chests, and a small stock of clothing, to be taken on as "green hands" to assist in the sealing. They are shrewd lazy customers, little liked by the regular hands, and poorly paid, and kicked about briskly; but they, nevertheless, come in such numbers that there is generally little difficulty for each ship, in ten days or a fortnight, to make up its complement of men to from forty to seventy. Lerwick is then quite alive. It is the annual holiday of the old Scandinavian-looking village, which for the rest of the year stagnates in more than Shetland dullness. The crooked, narrow streets are alive with hundreds of seamen, who are always, more or less, under the influence of rum, though there is not, or was not, at the time of our visit, a single licensed house in the whole village. But the people are hospitable, and half-a-crown will go as far in producing from private stores bottles of ardent spirits, as anywhere else in the world. The boatmen and fishermen seem to keep open house, and vie with each other in showing kindness to and in making a harvest out of the sealers. At last, one by one, cheered in turn by the other vessels of the fleet, and by a demoniacal yell from a crowd of boys, and girls decked with caps and ribbons, at the landings, the vessels sail out of the Sound, and soon lose sight of Shetland. High seas generally prevail in these latitudes so early in the year; but if you are in a steamer it will not last long; in about a week little bits of oozy-looking ice, tossing about on the crests of the waves, will tell that you are approaching the scene of your labours. In a few days more

larger pieces will appear, and shortly afterwards dreary flocs will heave in sight to the northward.

The sealer now coasts along these fields of ice, observing the nature of the ice, and whether it is suitable for his purpose, and occasionally consulting with the captains of the other ships regarding their chances of a good cargo. Now and then he will push in among the broken-up flocs to test the nature of the ice, or whether any seals are in that direction, and if unsuccessful will push out again, and continue coasting round what he calls the "cant" of the ice. All this time the men are busily getting up the tools. These consist of sealing clubs—a sharp spike at the end of a handle three feet long—long sharp knives for skinning the seals, seal guns suitable for throwing ball, &c. The nights are long and dark at this season of the year, for the bright continual daylight of the Arctic regions has not yet begun to prevail, and snow and sleet are of hourly occurrence. Altogether it is cheerless work when there are no seals. Everybody is muffled from head to foot in the warmest clothing, and a fur cap which only leaves the tip of the nose, the eyes, and the mouth exposed. Hoar frost, and sometimes a miniature crop of icicles hang from the shaggy moustaches of the men as they trot backward and forward on the snow-covered deck to keep their feet warm, or hang dreamily over the side discussing the chances of a long purse versus a short one. For every man on board, from the captain and the surgeon to the cabin boy, is directly interested in the result of the voyage.

"Things look roughish," the old skipper remarks. "For twenty years I haven't seen such a nasty look-out." So he coasts along until he sees an opening wide and clear between the flocs, and pushes in. Coming from the open friendless sea, it looks quite homelike among the great flocs. The "leads" of open water look like streams meandering through a snow-covered country. A lazy seal, with its young at its side, staring up with great glassy eyes, also takes away from the appearance of utter desolation; and now and then a few seals, attracted by the whistling of the seamen, peep up above the oozy sea to see what is the matter. Darkness is settling down, but the old skipper still pushes on, trusting to the ironshod bows, and doubling and trebling of his ship. At last he finds the ice beginning to form around the vessel, so he anchors on to a floe and waits for morning. Before daylight is well on, the captain is shaken in his bunk by one of the watch to tell him that they think seals are not far off, for though the night is so dark that it is impossible to see ten yards ahead, yet they can hear the cries of seal pups. Morning shows, to the delight of these hardy hunters after pinnipeds, that in the darkness they have run in among a huge herd of seals quietly enjoying the dolce far niente of Arctic life. Not an hour is to be lost, for the ice may shift or a storm arise, and the fortune at their ship's side may be snatched out from before their eyes. From the "crow's nest" a sight may be seen

almost impossible to be described. Far as the eye can reach the spotless purity of the snow is speckled by huge flocks of seals reposing beside their escape holes which communicate with the sea beneath, and at their side are their helpless young. Long lines of hunters are leaving the ship, some armed with rifles, others with the sealing clubs, and other vessels having scented the plunder from afar are hurriedly making fast to the floe, or despatching parties over to the scene. Crack! crack! Every minute the noise rings through the clear Arctic air, telling that an old seal making for the water has been arrested in its career. These are generally the males, for the females will rarely desert their young until the last extremity, and will not unfrequently remain, and in attempting to defend their hapless offspring meet the same fate. As for the young which are unable to escape, a kick of the heavy sea boot or a blow of the sharp-spiked club settles their fate. No sooner is one killed than it is flayed: an operation which does not occupy more than two minutes, if so much. A rapid turn of the sharp sheath knife round the neck, another round each flipper, and a last one down the belly completes the operation; a few touches of the knife serving to take off the "jacket" or skin, to which is attached a layer of three inches or more of blubber, a white fatty substance streaked red with the blood-vessels. A man has rarely to stir over a few feet before he stuns or brains another, and so on he goes until he has collected quite a trophy around him. He now fastens the rope or "rueraddy" with which he is provided, to the skins and blubber, and drags them over the ice to a place where the boats are receiving them and carrying them to the ship. The man returns to his murderous work until he has completed a sufficient number to be again attached to his "rueraddy" and dragged to the boats. On board the ship they are dropped into the hold, a tally being kept of the quantity obtained, for entry in the log-book. Every seal which is dropped into the hold of the ship is something in the pocket of everybody, so that hard as is the work, and cruel the sport, the men go into it with a gusto, all the more vigorous that it is a break in the monotony of a sea voyage. The captain, from the crow's nest on the main royal-mast-head, is not forgetful of his faithful lieges, as is substantially shown by the "tots" of rum, which are now and then served out by the steward on the ice. All day long this work goes on, until, towards evening, a change is seen to have come over the morning purity of the snow. Everywhere the floe is scattered with the bleeding carcasses of seals, and the snow is dyed scarlet in the lines of the slaughtering parties. On the morrow the sealer renews his search, and, if successful, he may fill his vessel in a few days. The business is not, however, without its perils. Sometimes a sudden gale arises, and before the boats can get the men collected together, the floe will break up, and while the ship is driven out to sea, the unfortunate seamen will be left drifting about, exposed to the

storm on the swaying ice-fields; or a man will suddenly plump through a broken place in the ice, and before he can attract the attention of the eager hunters, will be carried away by the current under the floe and lost for ever. Storms will even occasionally destroy the vessel, but these mishaps are rarer here than in Baffin's Bay; and as another ship is usually at hand, there is seldom any loss of life. Frost bites are of daily occurrence, but are nothing compared with the condensed frozen vapour of the sea which pierces the face like a shower of needles. The feeling after being subjected to it for an hour or two is that of being shaved by a ragged razor, hence the seaman terms it "the barber." Again, he may be unlucky enough to get frozen in with his ship, with the seals in sight through the telescope from the mast-head, too far off to be of any use to him. So, Tantalus-like, he sees riches and is unable to grasp them, while the lucky Dutchman, who bears the reputation of being the best sealer in the Greenland sea, is filling his ship. But there is no help for it. So the skipper goes down to take his meridian rum and water—the sun being over the foreyard—growing something about a certain personage taking care of his own, and makes up his mind to meet a cold reception from "his owners," as he relates the tale of his ill-luck. He has another competitor besides the Dutchman: a grim old gentleman in a shaggy white coat. The sailors call him "the farmer;" but he is more widely known as the Polar bear. Seals form the greater portion of the polar bear's food, though he will often clear an islet of eider ducks' eggs in the course of a few hours. Every ice hummock sends forth its bear, and if you are to credit the Esquimaux report, the she bear makes for seals, with her cub hanging about her neck. Hunters will tell you, among other traditions of the sealing craft, how Jim Bilboe or Sandy McWhuddin, a messmate, was flensing a seal in the spring of '47, and felt a rough hand laid on his shoulder, and cried out—"What the Something do you want? None of your skylarking!" but getting no response, looked up, and was astonished to find a huge white bear with its paw on his shoulder, inquiring, in its own way, why he trespassed on his northern domains? Then, again, you will be told how Jan van der Drunk, "skipper of a Dutchman," was walking along the ice one afternoon, thinking of the Zuyder Zee, when he became suddenly conscious of being steadily accompanied, cheek by jowl, by a bear. As Captain Jan halted so did Bruin, and as the skipper walked so did the bear, until Jan's men relieved him by a sortie from the ship.

The seal itself is generally harmless enough; but it will sometimes endanger the sealer's peace of mind and "continuity of tissue." The bladder-nose will boldly meet his opponent, and even the quiet sober saddle-back, in the fury of maternal affection, will sometimes, when the sealer is flaying its pup, stretch her head out of the water and seize him by

the calf of the leg, inflicting with its powerful tusks very severe wounds.

A score of such yarns, you will hear while the good ship, Spoutin' Whale, is filling up with seals in the "Greenland Sea of the Dutch," as Mr. Norrie's old chart, which hangs up in the cabin, styles it. This is about the end of April, and now the great fields of ice are broken into fragments, and the carcasses of the seals covering it are either left to the polar bear or sunk to the bottom of the sea, where they must now, with those of whales, form such a bed, that I would like to hear the theory which geologists (say a couple of million years or so hence) will form regarding this "deposit," when the bed of the Spitzbergen sea forms fields of yellow grain, and England perhaps is a tropical forest!

The sealers care nothing for the flesh, though the livers are sometimes eaten. The Esquimaux, however, look upon the flesh in quite a different light, and, indeed, when cooked it is far from contemptible as the piece de resistance of an Arctic dinner, and very much superior to a burgomaster gull. The sealer, however, thinks it is unwholesome, for now and then he sees the young affected by a disease not unlike scrofula: an inflammation of the glands of the neck; and curiously enough this goitre-like disease induces dwarfishness in the seals, as it does in the Cretins of the Alps and elsewhere. Some of the sealers, if they intend to pursue the Spitzbergen whaling in the ensuing summer, follow the flocks of seals, which have now taken to the water, northward, and in the month of May often fall in with considerable numbers. This is called the "old sealing," but as the seals are apt to sink when shot late in the year, though early in the spring they are so fat as to float, this kind of business is not popular with the sealers, and most of them return home, to deposit their cargo, and to refit for the "Straits fishing" in Davis Strait and Baffin's Bay. As they steam gaily southward, the men get up the seals and pare the layer of blubber off the skins. If the voyage is likely to be a long or a warm one, a little salt is sometimes thrown over the skins, but generally the weather is cold enough for their preservation in perfectly good condition until they are unshipped. The old skipper is in high trim at his success, and over his evening grog tells all sorts of traditions of the trade. For instance, he relates how in the year '11, when he was 'prentice on board the Nancy Dawson, a square old bluff-bowed snuff-box of a Hull whaler, we were at war with France, and French cruisers liked nothing better than to take a run up in the North Sea and cut out an old whaler. There wasn't much in her, no doubt, but still she was a prize, and if nothing better she made a good blaze when burnt. They didn't dare, however, to venture in among the ice, as their vessels were not fortified for such work, and accordingly, when one summer day the Nancy Dawson had just unhooked from the floe, and a French man-o'-war bore down upon her, she ran immediately in among the ice,

where pursuit was out of the question. There she remained until the Frenchman was out of sight, but the whaler hadn't well got out before the cruiser heaved in sight again, but with the same result, her intended victim running in among the ice. In those days a convoy used to accompany the whalers north, but the skipper of the Nancy Dawson was of an independent turn of mind, and not believing much in the judgment of the whaler's admiral, he used to go off where he chose, and run his risk, and now he was running it with a vengeance. It seemed as if the Frenchman would cage him. At last she cleared off for good, as he thought, and after remaining for more than a week among the ice, a ship heaving in sight made all sail towards the Nancy Dawson to hear the news. The vessel certainly looked like a whaler. There was her "crow's nest," there were her guys, there was her—but stop! the old skipper was at the mast-head, shouting in a voice of thunder, "Port your helm there! It's the Frenchman again! He's got his blocks hoisted the wrong way. 'Bout ship!" so back to the ice they steered. The cruiser's disguise was not complete. In his attempt to imitate a whaler, he had erred in a few technical points, and finding his victim was not to be entrapped, he steered off for a more promising chase. Then he tells of the old sealer who was chased by a French sloop of war, off Shetland, and how they kept up a running chase. First the whaler fired all his ball, then he fired broken harpoons, then half cheeses, until at last, in despair, he fired the poker and tongs, cutting through the Frenchman's rigging. He could hear the men on board the cruiser shouting, "he has chain shot on board!" and the cruiser dropped pursuit. In those days nearly all the better class of whalers were fitted out as privateers or letters of marque, and the skipper tells, with many sage nods, how it is generally supposed that a certain wealthy family of whaling owners made their money more by the capture of a French merchantman, which was driven by storms into their course to Davis Strait one summer's day, than by their legitimate trade. The whalers in those times had another enemy to dread nearer home, and that was our war vessels. These men-o'-war used to lie in the Pentland Frith and off the Shetlands, watching for the return of the whalers, when they would press every man on board except the apprentices and the officers, who were exempt. Knowing this, when they arrived off the coast, the men liable to be pressed would take the boats and work their way secretly down the coast, sleeping in quiet coves or secreted by the fishing folk during the day, and rowing by night, until they arrived home, when they would conceal themselves until their vessel was ready to sail again. In the meantime their ship would be brought into port by the apprentices and officers.

All this time we steam south with our cargo, past the dreary island of Jan Mayen, with its now extinct volcano, and near Iceland, until we can see the north isles of Shetland, like

clouds on the horizon. At Lerwick we present the collector with a bottle of frozen beer, and discharge our Shetland men, towards whom Her Majesty's officials have a kindly feeling, and whom they do not search over strictly. These islemen have a knack, when on board a sealer, of living on oatmeal almost entirely (as they have the run of it), and saving their provisions for winter use. Even the medicines are not safe. The doctor will tell you that when he gives them a dose he makes them swallow it before him, otherwise they will save it for winter use, supposing that all medicine is equally the same for all diseases. The ribbon-capped damsels at the landing give a cheer, and we steam south for Dundee. Here the cargo is discharged, more coal and more provision are taken in, and by the beginning of May the vessel is off to the Davis Strait whaling.

We have only spoken of the Spitzbergen sealing: but there are many more seals got. The Russians kill many in the White Sea; and the Esquimaux, on the shores of Davis, kill numbers during the whole year on the ice and in their little "Kayaks." From Danish Greenland alone there are exported every year from forty to fifty thousand seal skins, besides blubber. The Newfoundland and Labrador seal fishery will yield as many as the Spitzbergen. Up to April, last year, two hundred and fifty thousand seals had been brought by the Newfoundland sealers into St. John's and Harbour Grace alone. All of these seals are "hair seals," and their skins are only used for leather, of which an excellent description is manufactured. The blubber yields a good quality of oil, each ton being worth on an average forty pounds: while the skins are worth, take one with another, five shillings a-piece, in the European market, so that it may be considered that the European (i.e. Spitzbergen and White Sea) and American Arctic (Greenland and Newfoundland) seal fishery cannot be worth much less than three hundred thousand pounds sterling annually. The fine fur seals come, as has been already said, mostly from the South Seas and the North Pacific; but in both regions, the former especially, they are getting rapidly exterminated.

NO WORK TO DO.

A NEW SONG TO A VERY OLD TUNE.

WE'RE a set of knaves and lazy loons,
Who'd rather beg than toil,
And rather steal than either, my boys,
If we saw the chance of spoil.
Hard work's a curse and a punishment
We've heard the parson say,
And we won't be cursed, if we can help,
Neither by night nor day.
'Tis money we seek, 'tis money we'll have,
If we howl till all is blue;
Money for baccy, and money for gin;
We don't want work to do.

Six hours of shouting in the streets
Is jolly good fun, and free,
And brings more shillings than ten hours' work;
Such fools the people be!

The girls and women think of our wives,
 The men dislike our bray,
 And throw us pence for lack of sense,
 If we'll only go away.
 'Tis money we seek, 'tis money we'll have,
 If we howl till all is blue;
 Money for 'baccy, and money for gin;
 We don't want work to do.

Success to gammon and false pretence,
 Success to the Barley Mow,
 And may never the world be less of an ass
 Than we all of us find it now!
 'Tis well to work if there's no escape,
 'Tis better to cadge and crawl;
 So throw us the coppers as fast as you can,
 Good people, one and all!
 For 'tis money we seek, 'tis money we'll have,
 If we howl till all is blue;
 Money for 'baccy, and money for gin;
 We don't want work to do.

APPARENT DEATH.

VERY lately, the present writer was requested to attend, on a Monday morning, the funeral of a lady sixty-seven years of age, the wife of the mayor of a small French town, who had died in the night between the Thursday and the Friday previous. On the company assembling, the curé informed us that the body would remain where it was for awhile, but that the usual ceremonies (except those at the cemetery) would be proceeded with all the same. We therefore followed him to the church, and had a funeral service without a burial. It transpired that the body was still quite warm, and presented no signs of decomposition.

In the ordinary course of things, this circumstance might not have prevented the interment; but the poor lady herself had requested not to be buried until decomposition should have begun beyond the possibility of mistake; and the family remembered, and regretted, that her brother had been put into the ground, three days after his death, while still warm, and with his countenance unchanged. They had occasionally felt uneasy about the matter, fearing that they *might* have been too precipitate in their proceedings. So in this case they resolved to take no irrevocable step without the full assurance of being justified in doing so. The corpse was kept uninterred long after every doubt was set at rest. Certainly we manage *some* things better in England than in France; amongst them being the interval allowed to elapse between death and interment. Still, there are circumstances and cases which, even here, afford matter for serious reflection.

It will easily be supposed that the dan-

gerous briefness of this interval has been urged upon the attention of the French Legislature, and been ably discussed by the French medical press. In 1866, a petition was presented to the Senate from a person named De Cornol, pointing out the danger of hasty interments, and suggesting the measures he thought requisite to avoid terrible consequences. Amongst other things, he prayed that the space of twenty-four hours between the decease and the interment now prescribed by the law should be extended to eight-and-forty hours. A long debate followed, in which Cardinal Donnet, Archbishop of Bordeaux, took a leading part. He was decidedly of opinion that the petition should *not* be set aside by the "order of the day," but that it should be transmitted to the minister of the interior for further consideration and inquiry. Some of the venerable prelate's remarks produced so great an effect on his auditors as to merit particular mention. He said he had the very best reasons for believing that the victims of hasty interments were more numerous than people supposed. He considered the regulations on this head prescribed by the law as very judicious, but unfortunately they were not always executed as they should be, nor was sufficient importance attached to them. In the village where he was stationed as assistant curate in the first period of his sacerdotal life, he saved two persons from being buried alive. The first was an aged man, who lived twelve hours after the hour fixed for his interment by the municipal officer. The second was a man who was quite restored to life. In both these instances a trance more prolonged than usual was taken for actual death.

The next case in his experience occurred at Bordeaux. A young lady, who bore one of the most distinguished names in the department, had passed through what was believed to be her last agony, and as, apparently, all was over, the father and mother were torn away from the heart-rending spectacle. At that moment, as God willed it, the cardinal happened to pass the door of the house, when it occurred to him to call and inquire how the young lady was going on. When he entered the room, the nurse, finding the body breathless, was in the act of covering the face, and indeed there was every appearance that life had departed. Somehow or other, it did not seem so certain to him as to the bystanders. He resolved to try. He raised his voice, called loudly upon the young

lady not to give up all hope, said that he was come to cure her, and that he was about to pray by her side. "You do not see me," he said, "but you hear what I am saying." Those singular presentiments were not unfounded. The words of hope reached her ear and effected a marvellous change, or rather called back the life that was departing. The young girl survived, and in 1866 was a wife, the mother of children, and the chief happiness of two most respectable families.

The last instance related by the archbishop is so interesting, and made such a sensation, that it deserves to be given in his own words.

"In the summer of 1826, on a close and sultry day, in a church that was excessively crowded, a young priest who was in the act of preaching was suddenly seized with giddiness in the pulpit. The words he was uttering became indistinct; he soon lost the power of speech, and sank down upon the floor. He was taken out of the church, and carried home. Everybody thought that all was over. Some hours afterwards, the funeral bell was tolled, and the usual preparations were made for the interment. His eyesight was gone; but if, like the young lady I have mentioned, he could see nothing, he could nevertheless hear; and I need not say that what reached his ears was not calculated to reassure him. The doctor came, examined him, and pronounced him dead; and after the usual inquiries as to his age, the place of his birth, &c., gave permission for his interment next morning. The venerable bishop, in whose cathedral the young priest was preaching when he was seized with the fit, came to his bedside to recite the *De Profundis*. The body was measured for the coffin. Night came on, and you will easily feel how inexpressible was the anguish of the living being in such a situation. At last, amid the voices murmuring around him, he distinguished that of one whom he had known from infancy. That voice produced a marvellous effect, and excited him to make a superhuman effort. Of what followed I need say no more than that the seemingly dead man stood next day in the pulpit, from which he had been taken for dead. That young priest, gentlemen, is the same man who is now speaking before you, and who, more than forty years after that event, implores those in authority not merely to watch vigilantly over the careful execution of the legal prescriptions with regard to interments, but to enact fresh ones, in order to

prevent the recurrence of irreparable misfortunes."

A remarkable pamphlet, *Lettre sur La Mort Apparente, Les Conséquences Réelles des Inhumations Précipitées, et Le Temps Pendant lequel peut persister L'Aptitude à être Rappelé à la Vie*,* by the late regretted Dr. Charles Londe, records accidents which are more likely than the preceding to occur in England. Even were the bathing season not at hand, deaths by drowning are always to be apprehended. We therefore cite the following:

On the 13th of July, 1829, about two o'clock in the afternoon, near the Pont des Arts, Paris, a body, which appeared lifeless, was taken out of the river. It was that of a young man, twenty years of age, dark-complexioned, and strongly built. The corpse was discoloured and cold; the face and lips were swollen and tinged with blue; a thick and yellowish froth exuded from the mouth; the eyes were open, fixed, and motionless; the limbs limp and drooping. *No pulsation of the heart nor trace of respiration was perceptible.* The body had remained under water for a considerable time; the search after it, made in Dr. Bourgeois's presence, lasted fully twenty minutes. That gentleman did not hesitate to incur the derision of the lookers-on, by proceeding to attempt the resurrection of what, in their eyes, was a mere lump of clay. Nevertheless, several hours afterwards, the supposed corpse was restored to life, thanks to the obstinate perseverance of the doctor, who, although strong and enjoying robust health, was several times on the point of losing courage, and abandoning the patient in despair.

But what would have happened if Dr. Bourgeois, instead of persistently remaining stooping over the inanimate body, with watchful eye and attentive ear, to catch the first rustling of the heart, had left the drowned man, after half-an-hour's fruitless endeavour, as often happens? The unfortunate young man would have been laid in the grave, *although capable of restoration to life!* To this case, Dr. Bourgeois, in the Archives de Médecine, adds others, in which individuals who had remained under water as long as SIX HOURS were recalled to life by efforts which a weaker conviction than his own would have refrained from making. These facts lead Dr. Londe to the conclusion that, *every day, drowned individuals*

* Paris, chez J. B. Baillière, Libraire de l'Académie Impériale de Médecine.

are buried, who, with greater perseverance, might be restored to life.

Nor is suffocation by foul air and mephitical gas, a rare form of death in the United Kingdom. It is possible that suspended animation may now and then have been mistaken for the absolute extinction of life. Dr. Londe gives an instructive case to the purpose. At the extremity of a large grocer's shop, a close narrow corner, or rather hole, was the sleeping-place of the shopman who managed the night sale till the shop was closed, and who opened the shutters at four in the morning. On the 16th of January, 1825, there were loud knocks at the grocer's door. As nobody stirred to open it, the grocer rose himself, grumbling at the shopman's laziness, and proceeding to his sleeping-hole to scold him. He found him motionless in bed, completely deprived of consciousness. Terror-struck by the idea of sudden death, he immediately sent in search of a doctor, who suspected a case of asphyxia by mephitism. His suspicions were confirmed by the sight of a night-lamp, which had gone out although well supplied with oil and wick; and by a portable stove containing the remains of charcoal partly reduced to ashes.

In spite of a severe frost, he immediately had the patient taken into the open air, and kept on a chair in a position as nearly vertical as possible. The limbs of the sufferer hung loose and drooping, the pupils were motionless, with no trace either of breathing or pulsation of the heart or arteries; in short, there were all the signs of death. The most approved modes of restoring animation were persisted in for a long while, without success. At last, about three in the afternoon, that is after *eleven hours'* continued exertion, a slight movement was heard in the region of the heart. A few hours afterwards, the patient opened his eyes, regained consciousness, and was able to converse with the spectators attracted by his resurrection. Dr. Londe draws the same conclusions as before; namely, that persons suffocated by mephitism, are not unfrequently buried, when they might be saved.

We have had cholera in Great Britain, and may have it again. At such trying times, if ever, hurried interments are not merely excusable, but almost unavoidable. Nevertheless, one of the peculiarities of that fearful disease is to bring on some of the symptoms of death, the prostration, the coldness, and the dull livid hues, long

before life has taken its departure. Now, Dr. Londe states, as an acknowledged fact, that patients, pronounced dead of cholera, have been repeatedly seen to move one or more of their limbs after death. While M. Trachez (who had been sent to Poland to study the cholera) was opening a subject in the deadhouse of the Bagatelle Hospital in Warsaw, he saw another body (that of a woman of fifty, who had died in two days, having her eyes still bright, her joints supple, but the whole surface extremely cold), which visibly moved its left foot ten or twelve times in the course of an hour. Afterwards, the right foot participated in the same movement, but very feebly. M. Trachez sent for Mr. Searle, an English surgeon, to direct his attention to the phenomenon. Mr. Searle *had often remarked it*. The woman, nevertheless, was left in the dissecting-room, and thence taken to the cemetery. Several other medical men stated that they had made similar observations. From which M. Trachez draws the inference: "It is allowable to think that many cholera patients have been buried alive."

Dr. Veyrat, attached to the Bath Establishment, Aix, Savoy, was sent for to La Roche (Department of the Yonne), to visit a cholera patient, Thérèse X., who had lost all the members of her family by the same disease. He found her in a complete state of asphyxia. He opened a vein; not a drop of blood flowed. He applied leeches; they bit, and immediately loosed their hold. He covered the body with stimulant applications, and went to take a little rest, requesting to be called if the patient manifested any signs of life. The night and next day passed without any change. While making preparations for the burial, they noticed a little blood oozing out of the leech-bites. Dr. Veyrat, informed of the circumstance, entered the chamber, just as the nurse was about to wrap the corpse in its winding-sheet. Suddenly a rattling noise issued from Thérèse's chest. She opened her eyes, and in a hollow voice said to the nurse: "What are you doing here? I am not dead. Get away with you." She recovered, and felt no other inconvenience than a deafness, which lasted about two months.

Exposure to cold may also induce a suspension of vitality, liable to be mistaken for actual death. This year, the French senate has again received several petitions relative to premature interments. The question is serious in a country where custom (to say nothing of law) rules that burials shall take place within

eight-and-forty, seventy-two, or at most ninety-six hours after death. And, considering the length of time that trances, catalepsies, lethargies, and cases of suspended animation have been known occasionally to continue, it is scarcely in England less interesting to us, though public feeling, which is only an expression of natural affection, approves, and indeed almost compels, a longer delay. The attention of the French government being once more directed to the subject, there is little doubt that all reasonable grounds for fear will be removed.

The petitioners have requested, as a precaution, that all burials, for the future, should, in the first instance, be only provisional. Before filling a grave, a communication is to be made between the coffin and the upper atmosphere, by means of a respiratory tube; and the grave is not to be finally closed until all hope of life is abandoned. These precautions, it will be seen at once, however good in theory, are scarcely practicable. Others have demanded the general establishment of mortuary chambers, or dead-houses, like those in Germany. And not only the petitioners, but several senators, seem to consider that measure the full solution of the problem. Article 77 of the Civil Code prescribes a delay of twenty-four hours only; which appears to them to be insufficient. Science, they urge, admits the certainty that death has taken place, only after putrefactive decomposition has set in. Now, a much longer time than twenty-four hours may elapse before that decomposition manifests itself. Deposit, therefore, your dead in a mortuary chapel until you are perfectly sure, from the evidence of your senses, that life is utterly and hopelessly extinct.

In Germany, coffins, with the corpses laid out in them, are placed in a building where a keeper watches day and night. During the forty years that this system has been in force, not a single case of apparent death has been proved to occur. This negative result cannot be cited as conclusive, either for or against the system. In a country where a million of people annually die, an experiment embracing only forty-six thousand corpses, is too partial to be relied on as evidence. Moreover, mortuary chambers exist only in a few great centres of population; and it is especially in small towns and country districts, where medical men are too busy to inspect the dead, that premature interments are to be apprehended.

Out of Germany, as in England and France, there might be a great difficulty in getting the population to accept and make use of mortuary chambers. And even if favourably looked upon in large cities, the rich, as in Germany, would refuse to expose their dead there to the public gaze. In the country and in isolated villages the plan would be impossible to carry out. M. Henri de Parville, while announcing the existence of an infallible test for distinguishing apparent from real death, protests that to wait until a body falls into decomposition, is just as opposed to French habits, to hygiene, and to the public health, as mortuary chambers are unacceptable by the public in general. He holds that the legislature has already adopted the wiser and more practical measure. The permission to inter a corpse cannot be granted until the civil officer has gone to see the body of the deceased. When the Article 77 of the Civil Code was under discussion by the Council of State, Fourcroy added: "It shall be specified that the civil officer be assisted by an officer de santé—a medical man of inferior rank to a doctor of medicine—because there are cases in which it is difficult to make certain that death has actually occurred, without a thorough knowledge of its symptoms, and because there are tolerably numerous examples to prove that people *have* been buried alive." In Paris, especially since Baron Haussmann's administration, Article 77 has been strictly fulfilled; but the same exactitude cannot be expected in out-of-the-way nooks and corners of the country, where a doctor cannot always be found, at a minute's warning, to declare whether death be real or apparent only. It is clear that the legislature has hit upon the sole indisputable practical solution; the difficulty lies in its rigorous and efficient application.

It has been judiciously remarked that it would be a good plan to spread the knowledge of the sure and certain characteristics which enable us to distinguish every form of lethargy from real death. It cannot be denied that, at the present epoch, the utmost pains are taken to popularise every kind of knowledge. Nevertheless, it makes slow way through the jungles of prejudice and vulgar error. Not long ago, it was over and over again asserted that an infallible mode of ascertaining whether a person were dead or not, was to inflict a burn on the sole of the foot. If a blister full of water resulted, the individual was not dead; if the contrary happened, there was no further

hope. This error was unhesitatingly accepted as an item of the popular creed.

The Council of Hygiène, applied to by the government, indicated putrefaction and cadaverous rigidity as infallible signs of actual death. In respect to the first, putrefaction, a professional man is not likely to make a mistake; but nothing is more possible than for non-professionals to confound hospital rotteness, gangrene, with true post-mortem putrefaction. M. de Parville declines to admit it as a test adapted for popular application. Moreover, in winter, the time required for putrefaction to manifest itself is extremely uncertain.

The cadaverous rigidity, the stiffness of a corpse, offers an excellent mode of verifying death; but its value and importance are not yet appreciable by everybody, or by the first comer. Cadaverous rigidity occurs a few hours after death; the limbs, hitherto supple, stiffen; and it requires a certain effort to make them bend. But when once the faculty of bending a joint is forcibly restored—to the arm, for instance—it will not stiffen again, but will retain its suppleness. If the death be real, the rigidity is overcome once for all. But if the death be only apparent, the limbs quickly resume, with a sudden and jerking movement, the contracted position which they previously occupied. The stiffness begins at the top, the head and neck, and descends gradually to the trunk.

These characteristics are very clearly marked; but they must be caught in the fact, and at the moment of their appearance: because, after a time, of variable duration, they disappear. The contraction of the members no longer exists, and the suppleness of the joints returns. Many other symptoms might be added to the above; but they demand still greater clearness of perception, more extended professional knowledge, and more practised habits of observation.

Although the French Government is anxious to enforce throughout the whole Empire, the rules carried out in Paris, it is to be feared that great difficulties lie in the way. The verification of deaths on so enormous a scale, with strict minuteness, is almost impracticable. But even if it were not, many timid persons would say: "Who is to assure us of the correctness of the doctors' observations? Unfortunately, too many terrible examples of their fallibility are on record. The professional man is pressed for time. He pays a passing visit, gives a hurried glance; and a fatal

mistake is so easily made!" Public opinion will not be reassured until you can show, every time a death occurs, an irrefutable demonstration that life has departed.

M. de Parville now announces the possibility of this great desideratum. He professes to place in any one's hands, a self-acting apparatus, which would declare, not only whether the death be real, but *would leave in the hands of the experimenter a written proof of the reality of the death.* The scheme is this: It is well known that atrophine—the active principle of belladonna—possesses the property of considerably dilating the pupil of the eye. Oculists constantly make use of it, when they want to perform an operation, or to examine the interior of the eye. Now, M. le Docteur Bouchut has shown that atrophine has no action on the pupil when death is real. In a state of lethargy, the pupil, under the influence of a few drops of atrophine, dilates in the course of a few minutes; the dilatation also takes place a few instants after death; but it ceases absolutely in a quarter of an hour, or half an hour at the very longest; consequently, the enlargement of the pupil is a certain sign that death is only apparent.

This premised, imagine a little camera-obscura, scarcely so big as an opera-glass, containing a slip of photographic paper, which is kept unrolling for five-and-twenty or thirty minutes by means of clockwork. This apparatus, placed a short distance in front of the dead person's eye, will depict on the paper the pupil of the eye, which will have been previously moistened with a few drops of atrophine. It is evident that, as the paper slides before the eye of the corpse, if the pupil dilate, its photographic image will be dilated; if, on the contrary, it remains unchanged, the image will retain its original size. An inspection of the paper then enables the experimenter to read upon it whether the death is real or apparent only. This sort of declaration can be handed to the civil officer, who will give a permit to bury, in return.

By this simple method a hasty or careless certificate of death becomes impossible. The instrument applies the test, and counts the minutes. The doctor and the civil officer are relieved from further responsibility. The paper gives evidence that the verification has actually and carefully been made; for, suppose that half an hour is required to produce a test that can be relied on, the length of the strip of paper unrolled, marks the time during which the experi-

ment has been continued. An apparatus of the kind might be placed in the hands of the minister or one of the notables of every parish. Such a system would silence the apprehensions of the most timid. Fears—natural enough—would disappear, and the world would be shocked by no fresh cases of premature burial.

A SLIPPER DAY.

It must be a happy, comfortable house. It must be away from the town, but not too far for the arrival of pleasant news from the world without. A garden is indispensable. A yard where there are fowls. A couple of pigs, whose hams are destined to glorify the ample kitchen. At hand, a green-house, graced by a noble vine. A sunny fruit wall, where perfect peaches are kissed. A fair, not over spacious, meadow, with a meek-eyed cow to meet one at the gate, and scent the air with milky vapour. A handsome garden, rich in varieties of background shrubbery for the flowers: with a kitchen garden beyond, in which there must be sly corners of pet fruit-bushes.

This, my scene. In it, I have for this day made up my mind to do nothing. I will neither sow nor reap. The idle hands now lifting my dressing-room window to admit the flower-scented morning air, shall, when the sun goes down, be guiltless of work to-day. I shall not want the morning paper, except for a glance at the births, marriages, and deaths, with my cigarette after breakfast. A cold bath at seven refreshes me, for the enjoyment of idleness; a cold bath and a lazy toilette. I am perfectly indifferent as to time. My spaniel whines about my feet, hinting that the hour for a more intimate acquaintance with bacon has come; but to-day bacon and eggs, and sardines, and brawn, must wait my good pleasure. I survey the remote mystery of my wardrobe's treasures. I discover waistcoats and kerchiefs that had passed out of my memory. Why do I never wear that blue cravat my wife's aunt gave me? Graceless fellow that I am, the breast-pin my mother-in-law bestowed upon me, has not sparkled from my bosom twice this year. I linger over the parting of my hair. Bless me, how the grey is gaining upon my locks apace! My wife will be pronouncing a blessing on my frosty pate, as that of her John Anderson. The clematis nods in at the window: a bee settles upon the honey-soap, and flies off in a passion. A head shaking a rare tangle of golden curls is pushed into the room—a head I saw pillowed asleep, an hour ago. Will I never come down to breakfast? I beg to remind my dear that I am master of my time. I have no train to catch, no post to make up, no appointments to keep, nothing to do. An arm is twined within mine, a little hand is thrust through my over-brushed hair (*I had contrived to cover the snowy skein*), and *I am drawn down-stairs.*

While tea and coffee are brewing, or while I choose to pretend they are brewing, I escape into the garden, followed by Boswell, my spaniel. I make for my favourite fruit corner, dallying with the flowers, and drawing in plentiful oxygen by the way. Boswell is master of my manly mind, as I am of his canine person. He knows whither my idle steps will tend. Therefore, being a dog with a taste for prospecting among gooseberry bushes, he gravely precedes me; and we are presently both found, and pronounced pigs, by the saucy owner of that same pretty head of curls which flashed upon my dressing-room just now. A saunter back to the breakfast-parlour, broken by a gossip with the gardener about the untoward season which will not exactly adapt itself to the growth of my vegetable-marrows for the exact moment I want them.

A happy family looks best at breakfast, and breakfast is at its best in summer time: albeit Leigh Hunt—a notable authority on domestic graces and celebrations—says: "One of the first things that belong to a breakfast is a good fire. There is a delightful mixture of the lively and snug in coming down into one's breakfast-room of a cold morning, and finding everything prepared for us; a blazing grate, clean table-cloth, and tea-things, newly-washed faces and combed heads of a set of good-humoured urchins, and the sole empty chair ready for its occupant." I grant the tea, the coffee, the dry toast, the butter, the eggs, the ham, something potted, the bread, the salt, the mustard, the knives, the forks; but I will not give up the summer time, the dishes of fruit, the fresh-cut flowers, the lilac of May, and the roses of June. Breakfast, I maintain, is at its sweetest and best when the lark, having built its nest in the corn, is singing over the ripening harvest. I can part with the fire, in favour of the fruit and flowers, the open window, and the insects murmuring by the petals of the floral riches we have brought forth from the hothouse. I concede the washed faces and combed heads—in moderation as to numbers; and I am particular as to the heads being only a trifle higher than the table. A little sprightly miss is bearable at the breakfast hour; but no romp, nor clatter of tongues, no confusion in the number to be helped. So easily contented am I, that I can bear an idle breakfast, with only those golden curls opposite me, and one silvery voice to read me gossip from the crisp paper.

I like to be startled from the table with a "Gracious me, dear, it's eleven o'clock!" and a pretty dash at the key-basket. I survey the crimson which has been lovingly added to the gay macaw of my slippers; pondering the power the gentle worker has over me, and twisting my cigarette, with which I am to be dismissed back to the garden. The mere sense of existence is enough for me now. I keep in the shade of the lime or elm; but mostly in that of the lime, the blossoms of which mingle their perfume with my tiny blue veins of smoke. I beg to observe that I do not read,

and I never admit within my slipper day the least intention of reading. My castle hence owes nothing to the printer. No church door can show a lazier biped than I, advisedly, on a slipper day. I sit up in ordinary. I lounge from the garden under the lime, to the lawn. The gardener who is cutting the grass under the sun, imagines I am boring myself there, because I set leaves floating upon the air, and lie watching the tiny eddies master them, and am next engrossed with the flittings of a dragon-fly. His pitying me while I lift the lilies and gaze at the yellow cups, and drop them again, the bees free access. I can count the flies ripening upon the red wall. The sun at the wall's base remind me of something I have to say to Mrs. Goldencurls about her—
—at lunch time will do.

My resources enough left. I am keeping the poultry-yard. I haven't seen the chickens. The plants I saw potted out, are waiting my visit. How much milk has the cow yielded? Gossip with the groom. Goldencurls has not made her appearance with her round gipsy hat, to the utter confusion of the gardener, who, I am sure, would be useful to her if she would speak to him in her own voice. The morning flies away. I am in the acacia bower, and am restless half-sleep, with flies tickling my cheeks and temples. A silvery little laugh awakes me. I catch a certain lady, with a guilty smile in her hand, who has been enacting the part of fly. I am good enough to be sporty: and to protest that her ladyship is at luncheon alone. Hereupon, Mrs. Goldencurls acts the commanding queen; the impossible little feet that, cased in slippers, look like June flies; and waving with the feather, commands her to follow. Who follows.

For luncheon, and plenty of it; the cake Goldencurls has made; the dainty sandwich she has cut; the little cider-cup she holds, just enough for two, with her lips to it now and then for sweetening. It is at this time appear to the reader that the day of which I am now noting a few of the chief points, belongs essentially to the golden days of married life: to the sweet time when the bride is settling into the wife, and has ceased to cry on her lord's departure in the morning. Well, a slipper day is most enjoyable in this May-time of married life; but the slippers need not be put away when the wedding-gown has been for the children. I have two little heads of golden curls, and I am not by any means disposed to throw my slippers away, and for an idle day henceforth. I still find myself loath to give up "the nasty city" for an hour-and-twenty hours; and the reader is confidentially admitted to perceive that Mrs. Goldencurls is playful enough to wake up a feather in the acacia arbour. Like her she picks my strawberries, and sprinkles

them with sugar, and opens the ball by tasting them for me: taking care still (as her wont was when we were a bridal pair in the Isle of Wight), to pop the first into my mouth, with her own fingers.

I am good enough to listen, over luncheon, to the lighter stories of domestic management; or to the gossip from the near township. Mrs. Consens came down yesterday for the first time. Ralph's good-for-nothing son, who opened his career of infamy by breaking the doctor's bell, has just come back from the Cape, and not in the least improved. Mr. Silenus was seen driving home, tipsy again, last night. Some night Mr. S. will break his neck. There is no more beer in the house. The luncheon, seasoned with this light discourse, which I like, as tending to carry a man away from his own selfish matters, is got through. I run my eye vacantly, musingly, along the backs of the books in the library. I muster the energy on occasions, to pull down a volume, but I never go beyond the title-page before I put it back again. My wife tells me it is more than my place is worth, to lay a finger on the plants; although when I return home very tired from the city, and the gardener has neglected his duties (being much of Mr. Silenus's way of thinking), I am not refused the privilege of watering the garden.

The afternoon slips away. Slipping away is the feeling proper to a slipper day. I have left my watch hanging in my dressing-room. O yes, I dare say! I am allowed in the kitchen to day, but sometimes I am chased out of it—when I am not wanted to plant my heavy forefinger upon the string, in order that Mrs. Goldencurls may tie down the jelly tight. I have been made useful in the shelling of peas before now, but have ever protested, as I protest now, that the dignity of manhood does not appear impressively in the process.

Getting through the afternoon! I shall be left, at the end of the day, wondering how the time managed to escape, even without croquet or bowls. I return to observe whether the big fish I saw under the water-lilies is still lazily balancing himself there, until the gloaming shall usher him to his feast of flies. Boswell, diving for pebbles, is diverting for half an hour. I compare my knowledge of the notes of birds with that of the gardener. The swallows whirl under my eaves, and I gaze pensively at them; then the odours of coming dinner steal through the kitchen windows into the stable-yard, where I deprecate the waste of corn and hay with Reuben the groom, who is quite certain that no horse was ever kept in prime condition so cheaply as mine.

Henceforth my idle day is filled, for Mrs. Goldencurls is always quoting Lady Mary Wortley Montague: "The most trivial concerns of economy become noble and elegant when exalted by sentiments of affection; to prepare a meal is not merely giving orders to my cook; it is an amusement to regale the object I dote on." Hearing my voice in the stable-yard, her golden head appears at the kitchen window, and a tomato is held up, in

token of the obedience which is paying to my hint at the luncheon table. A tomato consigned to the stewpan by the beloved hand! A cigarette; Boswell by my side; the shady side of the garden; forty winks; and a light waking dream. The shadows of the elms stretch across the turf. The cow is waiting at the yard gate. I steal to my lady's window, and cast some gravel at it. The golden curls are being put in order for dinner. I am asked whether I am going to sit at table that fright? I am bidden to make myself respectable directly. Suppose somebody should call! Whoever heard of dining in slippers! Men are such untidy creatures!

I remain firm in my slippers, and effect a compromise by passing through my dressing-room. When I am told that I am the very laziest man in the whole country, my pride is aroused. The rising sun greeted a certain person who vowed that he would do a day's idleness, and that person is now strolling into the dining-room, guiltless of one useful act since the sun rose. He is told that he should have taken a long walk to get him an appetite; that he might have spent his afternoon in balancing the household expenses. But he has done nothing—absolutely nothing—and he is honestly proud of the achievement.

Pleasant dinner, when order and taste are of the company! Few dishes, but each stamped with the learned approval of Mrs. Goldencurls before they appear. Bright eyes watching the pleasure with which the proprietor (or slave) of Mrs. Goldencurls commends the preparation of the pet delicacy, the tomato.

"The coffee is my business." Such, the observation of Mrs. Goldencurls; one, I expect, the sly puss stole from Brillat Savarin. Liqueur, some Benedictine I brought from Normandy. Gossip about the monks turned liqueur merchants, and gathering herbs upon the flowery downs round about Fécamp for their exquisite strong water, carries the sunset quite out of the room, and the fingers that picked the strawberries, and stewed the tomato, and roughened my hair in the morning, are busy at the lamp.

LITTLE WITCH AND THE MISERS.

IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

"CAW! caw!" cried an old rook, turning out of his nest in the wood, sweeping down the street, and dashing his wings against little Witch's window-pane. Just at the same moment the sun, very red in the face, struggled above the heads of the trees and shot a furious glance after the rook, who had dared to get up before him. Between the rook and the sun little Witch was well wakened: and she got up too.

"What noise is that?" cried the elder of the two old Miss Scarecrows, sitting up in her bed with her dreadful curl-papers on

end. She was shouting into the next room to her sister. You see the rooms were rather empty, and the walls were thin, and the voices could be heard quite well calling from one chamber to the other; which was very convenient in a house where there was no servant to answer the bell.

"It is nothing," replied the voice of the other Miss Scarecrow, "nothing but the little wench next door raking out the kitchen-grate. Very wasteful of her to be lighting fire so early. It happens every morning. Can't you get accustomed to it, Tabitha?"

"No, I can't!" returned Tabitha. "Troublesome busybody that the girl is!"

When the Scarecrow family met that day to eat what they called their breakfast, it was found that the Brother Scarecrow had also been startled out of his sleep by a noise in the next house. And he complained of it bitterly.

"Sleep," he said, "is a luxury which one may indulge in with safety. It costs nothing. Once you have invested money in a bed and covering there is no more expense. It is as cheap to sleep twelve hours as three, and the more sleep you take the less food you require. You are not hungry when you are unconscious. Therefore I hold it a criminal thing to disturb the rest of others by untimely rising. Something must be done to check our neighbours in a dangerous career. They run the risk of robust health, with its ruinous accompaniment—a keen appetite for meals. It is pitiable to see young people rushing thus headlong to destruction."

"Besides, being up so early leaves a great deal of time on their hands," said Miss Tabitha; "and if they should take to climbing—young people are fond of climbing—and should begin to dig in our garden!"

Brother Scarecrow turned pale and his head drooped.

"How foolish!" squeaked Miss Seraphina. "Those tall young women climb walls!"

"The youngest is not so tall," said the gruff Tabitha, "and she's as nimble as a kid. I saw her in her own garden the other morning digging up the earth with a spade. It is she who rises so early. I am sure there is something in it."

"This is too dreadful!" said Brother Scarecrow, faintly. And he immediately became so ill that they were obliged to put him to bed.

It was generally believed by the inhabitants of the street that the Scarecrow

family had been living in number two ever since the street had been built, and judging by the aspect of the place, without even consulting the almost obliterated date upon the gable, this was a long time ago. So long ago, indeed, that the above-mentioned popular faith cast a lurid gleam of ghostliness over the existence of these Scarecrows. The family consisted of Tabitha and Seraphina, and the brother, who was, if possible, older than the sisters. Upon the parchment visages of all three Time had scribbled such innumerable hieroglyphics that it had become impossible to decipher what any of them meant. They were all three ugly to look upon, with features that reminded one of ancient wooden idols, so hacked and notched, and dinged were they by a curious co-operation of years and Nature. In figure they reminded one of the besom which was ordered to stand forth upon two legs surmounted by a head.

The two ladies frightened Witch and her sisters when they passed by the windows to take an airing. They wore short black gowns, and their elbows were pinioned to their sides under their scanty shawls. Their bonnets were huge black things that fluttered dreadfully as the heads shook under them, making them nod like the plumes on a hearse. When they walked, they threw their feet about as if those members had been loose at the ankles. When an echo of their conversation could be heard, things became worse; for Miss Tabitha had a gruff guttural voice, while Miss Seraphina spoke in shrill tones like the rasping of a file upon wires. As for the old gentleman, he was seldom seen, except walking up and down the waste garden at the back of the house, cleaning a bunch of keys, and stopping often to gaze down on one spot of the earth in a corner. Into this mould he would stare for hours at a time, as if some precious seed were buried there, and he watched so earnestly, so patiently, for the first green speck that should tell him it had not rotted into nothingness in its grave. Thus much was seen of the Scarecrow family by the outer world. A charwoman, who had been in and out, told how the two old women uncovered their scraggy shoulders, like the finest ladies in the land, before they sat down to their dinner of dry crusts and scraps of mouldy cheese. Also of how the morsels of coal were counted as they were dropped into the kitchen grate, and how the sisters sat, each with her feet upon a cat for

warmth; said cats living exclusively upon mice, with chance bones from a neighbour's larder.

Now, Witch, the offensive neighbour, was a seventh daughter; and so it was no wonder that there was something unusual about her. She looked like a changeling among her six sisters, who were all very tall and slim, with long throats and noses, pale eyes and mouths, and very light hair, which they dressed in the fashion, and which occupied most of their time. When they all swooped into a room, it was like the perching and pluming of a flight of storks. Little Witch was quite swallowed up in the crowd that they made, and when one did catch a glimpse of her she looked, as I have said, like a changeling, so different was she from the rest. It was not that Witch was so little, but that the sisters were so big. She scarcely reached up to their shoulders. And then her eyes were brown, each carrying a spark of fire, though shaded about by many dark touches under the brows. Her lips made a deep red against her white teeth, and her cheeks were almost always dimpled, for she had a habit of smiling. There was nothing magnificent about her nose, and her hair twined back from her face and hung in a mass on her shoulders. Her head was subject to fits of cold bathing, and was often seen to go shaking itself merrily like a water dog, to the dismay of the sisters, who frizzed their locks with hot irons: a process utterly ruined by damp. She did not possess one feature or attribute of the family. She was short, where the sisters were long; round, where the sisters were square; red, where the sisters were pale, and pale where the sisters were red. But then the sisters were, all six, fine women, and Witch was only a comely little girl. As for her name, that came of her being so quick-witted; for when she hit upon things that they never could have thought of, the sisters would nod their fair heads, and say, "She is a perfect witch!" And so "witch" came to be a household word.

The household consisted of Witch and the sisters. These seven had neither father, mother, brother, nor servant. The eldest of all was old enough to be a mother to the rest, but she had no taste for being a mother; and so the duty devolved upon little Witch; for, next to the eldest, the youngest is the most important member of a family. Witch was mother and servant too. She wheedled the butcher, bargained

with the chimneysweep, handled brush and frying-pan, and darned stockings for all the seven pairs of feet. And the sisters thought very highly of themselves for allowing her to make herself so useful. Besides, they had seen better days, which made things come hardly upon them; whereas Witch had only seen just so much of those days as furnished a sort of golden rim to the little memories of a very short childhood. And she took as kindly to the rough side of life as if she had been made for it.

They had seen their better days in their paternal dwelling at O'Thriftless-Town, in the county of Mayo, where their dear father had faithfully followed the hounds as long as his old red coat would hold together. The six elder sisters had had their seasons in Dublin, had danced at the castle, and promenaded in the squares, and gone a-riding in the Phoenix Park; while little Witch was enjoying a delicious little bogtrotting life of her own among the sweet mountain wilds; while father O'Thriftless was falling under the table at fox-hunting dinners, and the poor mother was striving hard to do her duty by elders and youngers, to keep the wolf from the door, and to hold her head high. In this struggle she had broken down at last, and, in spite of debt and vengeful tradesmen, had been allowed to retire peacefully under the mould, where not the most impertinent dun would dare to knock upon the door of her narrow house. Hither, to this home of freedom, her husband soon followed her, exchanging his gay old hunting-coat for a shroud. Then did the wolf at last enter at that door, long so bravely guarded—entered at a bound, and devoured everything in one meal. Then did the sisters, amid their tears, gather up the mite that was left for them to live upon, and fly off out of sight and hearing of their pitying neighbours. Witch had been for staying in the country, in a cabin, if need be, within hearing of the sea, and within reach of the old graveyard where the two loved heads had their rest; for remaining on good terms with the birds and the lambs, at least, if not with the best country families. She would have dressed herself all in the red-flannel peasant garb of the country, and walked to and fro on the heather in her pretty bare feet, under the very noses of the gentry, rather than have left her happy hills. But this was not to be. The six sisters packed up their tiny all, and flew off to bury themselves in the city.

Here, in this dingy street, they had

buried themselves. A very small house would not hold so many tall young women, and when they took up their abode in a dwelling that would contain them, they shook their bewildered heads and said, "We must do without a servant." This was very sad. Bella burnt her fingers and blackened her face trying to light the fire; Barbara cut her hands chopping the vegetables; Kathleen shed tears into the frying-pan, through mingled grief and smoke; and Alice fell down the stairs, whilst descending them backwards for sweeping purposes. By the time Witch had done eking out morsels of carpet, and coaxing scanty hangings to clothe the naked window-frames, she found that she had now got to nurse every one of her six sisters in turn. Things were not mended when one day a carriage dashed up to the door. Some acquaintance of other times had found them out, and come to call. Sisters stood wringing their hands, in the parlour, in the hall, on the stairs. Which of them would be bold enough to open that dingy hall-door? It was bad enough to answer to the butcher and the baker; but Lady O'Dowd's footman had carried their prayer-books to church before now. A subdued howl of anguish arose from six mouths.

"They do not know me," said Witch. "Let me go." She twisted her long hair into a tight knot on her head, pinned over it a white handkerchief, in the shape of a round cap, tied a white muslin window-blind before her for an apron: and had the hall-door open in a trice.

The ladies were not at home to visitors, said the neat little maid to the tall footman; but cards were graciously received. A few of the sisters cried over the occurrence all the evening. But Witch thought they had had a lucky escape. And it was acknowledged that Witch had found her vocation.

On the morning before mentioned, after disturbing her neighbours as has been described, Witch fulfilled her usual tasks and finished making her noises. She put the kettle on the fire. She drew down the blind in the parlour so that the sun might not make away with the small bit of colour that was left in the carpet. The milk had been taken, and the breakfast bread, when Witch put on her little old cloak and her shabby brown hat, tucked a battered tin colour-box under her arm, shut her hall-door, and set off at a swift trot, out of the shabby street, all along a golden path towards the bristling wood where the rook lived who came to call her of mornings.

was going to make a little money till fast time. Not a great deal, but with rather so urgent about his bill, and in tears over a shabby bonnet, nothing so small to be despised. Drawing the one accomplishment which this possessed. Each of her sisters could a noise on the old piano if required, Witch had never learned a note of. Give her, however, that old tin box, a sunbeam, a patch of yellow a red-breast swaying on a tangle of briars, a purple cave hollowed among leaves, and I warrant you she would you a little picture which would set longing for a taste of the fresh air.

lucky power she owed to nobody. A forgotten ancestor had willed it, and the capital of talent having circulated through lying untouched for many generations, had swelled usefully by the time it was delivered to Witch. It came amongst her quite naturally at the waving of a wand which is used to be called a little. It had supplied her childhood with stic joys, and now it helped to satisfy girlhood's healthy appetite for bread-crumbs, besides gilding her early hours with such a sheen of delight as cast a gleam over all the after-drudgery of the

For Witch was accustomed to re-sundry pieces of silver counted out till of an important shop in the in exchange for so many inches of her morning mounted on white board. which brought a greater number inches to the shopkeeper's pocket than was pleased to give of shillings to little

When Witch had gained her favourite in the wood, some one started out of leaves to meet her. "Good morning! morning!" rang two eager voices, spring one another joyously, and the wings flapped, and also seemed to clasp the birds to twitter echoes of resting. Witch's friend was a slender, rather starved-looking, with a sweet face, and large sad eyes. He looked his spirit had quite outgrown his body, as his body had outgrown his clothing. His leaves were short and his shoes were old large, and the soul of a poet was long out of his wan, boyish face.

"I thought you would never come," he said as they sat down each on a mossy stone, and looked at one another, shading their eyes from their eyes with their hands. "I have been here since the first light." "Oh, but you had no grates to polish,

and no fires to kindle," said Witch, as she unpacked her box, and began to flourish her brushes.

"No, but I worked very late last night to finish this," he said, shaking out some flashing folds of silk into the sunshine. "See, it is to tie over your head while you paint."

"What a gorgeous little kerchief!" cried Witch. "It is the work of a poet-weaver indeed! It is as good as a little poem!" she said, turning it on this side and that in the sun. The pattern was a wonderful arabesque of the most soft and brilliant colours interwoven with gold. "Oh dear! oh dear! these bright silks cost money. Where did you get it, Barry?"

"I saved it," said the lad.

"And went without your dinner, and your breakfast, and your sleep! Oh, you foolish boy!" And Witch began to cry.

"Don't, Witch!" said Barry. "It was good for me. I am not hungry, indeed, and it was as you say, as good as a poem to me—at least it is part of one—I mean I made one out of it. See here, all the colours were ideas to me. This purple was mournfulness, this crimson was love, these gold threads were little rays of joy darting backward and forward through my fancy with my shuttle. The little song is about you. Shall I show it to you?"

The poem was read. Any one who would care to see it will find it in the volume of Weaver's Songs, afterwards published by Barry, and received into favour by the world.

"It is beautiful, beautiful!" cried Witch, with the tears flashing from her eyes into her lap, "and all the more wonderful because pure imagination. The Witch of your poem is not this hum-drum little person. But it will delight the world all the same."

"No, no," said Barry, eagerly, "it is the poetry that is mean. I have things in my heart which I cannot put into words. I ache with them tossing about at night. I dream of them sitting at my loom all day. I see things in nature, in life, in you, which I strive to grasp that I may sing of them over the earth. They float, float away from my touch. The words that I put upon my thoughts are like foolish masks. One can hardly see any eyes of meaning shining through them. Sometimes I think that if I had been born to the speaking of some other tongue, I should have been able to utter myself."

The lad flung himself against a tree, with a great glow of sadness in his eyes.

"You deceive yourself," said Witch, vehemently. "You have too much work and

too little to eat, and you get sick fancies. You are a poet in your own tongue, and if you had been born a negro you would have made poetry out of broken English. The whole world will get up in a mass and tell you about it one day."

The boy grasped both her hands, and trembled with delight. "How beautiful it is to be believed in!" he said.

Then Witch spread her brilliant kerchief over her shoulders to divert Barry from his sad thoughts, and danced about softly in the sun, so as to make the colours burn, and the gold threads glitter. Her drawing was finished, and perhaps she should get seven shillings for it to-day. So there was gaiety of heart, as well as leisure for a dance. Witch's eyes were radiant above the red and purple and gold on her bosom, and her long dark tresses rose and fell with the motion of her figure, half shrouding the dazzling garment. She and the sun danced together among the trees.

"You are a living poem, indeed!" said Barry, rushing to follow her. But Witch waved him softly backwards with her pretty brown hands, singing mock incantations to the wood sprites all the time: then suddenly linked her arm in his, and these two children went flying down the chequered slope of the wood, through the light, through the shade, snatching at the branches, and balancing one another, till they arrived at the bottom, laughing and breathless.

Witch did not show her kerchief to the sisters. If it had been anything they could wear to make them smart going to church, or for a walk, she would have held herself to be selfish in possessing it. But as well might one wear a macaw in one's bonnet as display such a kerchief in the street. It was too precious and wonderful, and redolent of poetry to be handled and coveted, and turned to some foolish use. Witch owned a little box with a key. And in it she deposited her treasure.

But sometimes she took it out very early of mornings, when she could not go to the wood to see Barry, and gave it an airing up and down the little ragged garden, just to see the sun flashing on it, and to feel it glittering on her bosom, as Barry's love glittered on her life. Now it chanced one morning that Miss Seraphina Scarecrow had wakened very early, and had come down a part of her staircase, wrapt in unsightly gear, to take a stolen peep at the world from her lobby window. Poor Miss Sera-

phina had a half worn-out touch of sentimentality in her composition. Starving, and saving, and growing dreadfully ugly, had not taken it from her. Only she was careful to keep it out of sight of her sister and brother. So sometimes of mornings she came thus to the lobby window, pressing her sad gnome-like face to the pane, and gazing across one frowsy faded tree to the light of the breaking dawn. Thus doing she beheld Witch, a gay fluttering little figure, dancing lightly and slowly up and down the path with her brilliant kerchief spread over her shoulders, and her hair rising and falling and floating behind her, while the sunlight picked wonderful glories out of Barry's gilded web. Miss Seraphina saw, and remained riveted where she stood, gazing with distended eyes. She tottered backward, and sat down feebly upon the nearest step, while all her curl-papers shook and rustled. By-and-by she arose and went back to the window, but dancing, dazzling Witch was gone.

Seraphina climbed her flight of stairs, and went into her sister's room.

"Tabitha!" she said.

Tabitha, waking, responded gruffly.

"Tabitha, the little girl next door has got a paroquet kerchief."

"Nonsense!" ejaculated Miss Tabitha.

"But she has," moaned Seraphina. "I have seen it on her shoulders. Green and crimson, and purple and yellow. They are all there, burning and glistening just as they used."

"Some tenpenny plaid out of the nearest shop," growled Tabitha.

"No, no," said Seraphina, "it burned with gold. It is the paroquet."

"And what if it be?" said Tabitha.

"There is only one in the world," sobbed Seraphina.

"You are an idiot!" said Tabitha. "Will you try and get a little sense? If you don't begin soon it will be too late. There, get away! What an appetite you will have for breakfast after being up at such an hour!" And snubbed Seraphina went back to her bed, and lay staring at the pictures in the damp on the ceiling. And her poor heart ached.

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BOOK III.

ER IX. FOR ONCE GERTRUDE TAKES THE LEAD.

lives of the two girls at Lady Caroline were so completely happy, that they induced to doubt whether they had really lived before. The difference between their ricketty, disorderly, Bohemian life while their father was alive, the sad and poverty-stricken home which shared with their mother until her death, and the refined comforts and luxuries awaited them at their uncle's, was, of course, very great. But they were too young to feel it at the time, and they had come to regard Woolgreaves as their home, and Marian Ashurst entered upon it as mistress, as an epitome of everything that was charming. Lady Caroline's house was much smaller than Woolgreaves; her life, probably, was nothing like their father's; and yet about her house and her habits, her carriage, and everything she had there was a stamp of refinement and good taste, springing from high breeding such as they had never witnessed, even in Mrs. Creswell's régime; and whatever fault the girls found with Mrs. Creswell, they invariably allowed her the possession of good taste. And Lady Caroline herself was so different, so immeasurably superior to any woman they had ever seen. With the exception of Lady Caroline, they had known no one save the great people and the wives of the principal manufacturers at Brocksope, who had daughters of other principal manufacturers at Shuttleworth and Combcarham, and might have been made in

one mould, or punched out of one piece; and Lady Caroline was a stupid old woman in a brown front, who, as Gertrude knew, said "obleege," and "apurn" for apron, and "know-ledge," and nearly drove you mad by the way in which she stared at you and rubbed her nose with a knitting-needle, while you were attempting to find conversation for her. But, in the girls' eyes, Lady Caroline was perfection; and it would have been indeed odd had they not thought her so, as, for reasons best known to herself, she went in more determinedly to make herself agreeable to them than she had done to any one for some years previous.

One reason was that she liked the girls, and was agreeably disappointed in them; she had expected to find them provincial parvenues, thrown upon her by their quarrel with a person of similar position and disposition with themselves, and had found them quiet lady-like young women, unpretentious, unobtrusive, and thoroughly grateful to her for the home which she had offered them in their time of need. From the step which she had taken so chivalrously Lady Caroline never shrank, but she told the girls plainly, in the presence of Mr. Joyce, that she thought it highly desirable that the fact of their being there as her guests should be officially made known to Mr. Creswell, to whom every consideration was due. As to Mrs. Creswell, there was no necessity to acknowledge her in the matter; but Mr. Creswell was not merely their nearest blood relation, but, until adverse influences had been brought to bear upon him, he had proved himself their most excellent friend, and even at the last, so far as Lady Caroline could gather from Gertrude, had made some feeble kind of fight against their leaving

his house. Mr. Joyce and the girls themselves were also of this opinion, Gertrude jumping at the prospect of any reconciliation with "dear old uncle," but avowing her determination to have nothing more to do with "that horrid madam;" and it was on Maud's suggestion, backed by Walter, that the services of Mr. Gould were employed for mediatory purposes. This was just before the election, and Mr. Gould declared it was utterly impossible for him to attend to anything that did not relate to blue and yellow topics; but a little later he wrote a very kind letter, announcing Mr. Creswell's illness, and deploring the strict necessity for keeping from the old gentleman any subjects of an exciting nature.

The corroboration of this bad news was brought to the little household in Chesterfield-street by Mr. Benthall, who, about that time, ran up to London for a week, and, it is needless to say, lost very little time in presenting himself to Miss Gertrude. The relations between the Helmingham schoolmaster and Gertrude Creswell were, of course, perfectly well known to Lady Caroline through Walter Joyce; who had explained to her ladyship that the causeless exclusion of Mr. Benthall from Woolgreaves had been the means of bringing about the final domestic catastrophe, and had led more immediately than anything else to the departure of the young ladies from their uncle's house. So that Lady Caroline was predisposed in the clergyman's favour, and the predisposition was by no means decreased when she made his acquaintance, and found him to be one of the Shropshire Benthalls, people of excellent family (a fact which always has immense weight with other people who can make the same boast), and essentially a man of the world and of society. A girl like Gertrude Creswell, who, charming though she was, was clearly nobody, might think herself lucky in getting a man of family to marry her. Of course Mrs. Creswell could not understand that kind of thing, and took a mere pounds-shillings-and-pence view of the question; but Mrs. Creswell had no real dominion over her husband's nieces, and as that husband was now too ill to be appealed to, and the girls were staying under her chaperonage, she should, in the exercise of her discretion, give Mr. Benthall full opportunity for seeing as much of Gertrude as he chose.

Lady Caroline did not come to this determination without consulting Walter Joyce, and Walter did not express his

opinion without consulting Maud Creswell, of whose clear head and calm common sense he had conceived a high opinion. The joint decision being favourable, Mr. Benthall had a very happy holiday in London, finding, if such a thing were possible, his regard for Gertrude increased by the scarcely hidden admiration which the bright complexion, pretty hair, and trim figure of the country-girl evoked from the passers-by in the public places to which he escorted her. Indeed, so completely changed by an honest passion for an honest girl, was this, at one time, selfish and calculating man of the world, that he was most anxious to marry Gertrude at once, without any question of settlement or reference to her uncle; declaring that, however Mrs. Creswell might now choose to sneer at it, the school income had maintained a gentleman and his wife before, and could be made to do so again. Mr. Benthall spoke with such earnestness that Joyce conceived a much higher opinion of him than he had hitherto entertained, and would have counselled Lady Caroline to lend her aid to the accomplishment of the schoolmaster's wish, had it not been for Maud, who pointed out that in such a case a reference was undoubtedly due to their uncle, no matter what might be his supposed state of health. If he were really too ill to have the matter submitted to him, and an answer—which, of course, would be unfavourable—were to be received from Mrs. Creswell, they might then act on their own responsibility; with the feeling that they had done their duty towards the old gentleman, and without the smallest care as to what his wife might say. This view of Maud's, expressed to Joyce with much diffidence, at once convinced him of its soundness, and a little conversation with those most interested, showed them the wisdom of adopting it. Mr. Benthall wrote a straightforward manly letter to Mr. Creswell, asking consent to his marriage with Gertrude. The day after its despatch, Maud the impassible, who was reading the Times, gave a suppressed shriek, and let the paper fall to the ground. Joyce, who was sitting close by talking to Lady Caroline, picked it up, and read in it the announcement of Mr. Creswell's death.

Of course this news caused an indefinite postponement of the marriage. The two girls grieved with deep and heartfelt sorrow for the loss of the kind old man. All little differences of the past few months were forgotten. Marian had no part in their

thoughts, which were all of the early days, when, two miserable little orphans, they were received at Woolgreaves, at once put into the position of daughters of the house, and where their every wish was studied and gratified. Gertrude's grief was especially violent, and she raved against the hard fate which had separated them from their uncle at a time when they would have so much wished to have been near him to minister to and nurse him. Evidence soon came that Mr. Creswell's sense of what was honourable and right had prevented him from allowing any recent events to influence his intentions towards his nieces. In his will they were mentioned as "my dearly loved Maud and Gertrude, daughters of my deceased brother Thomas, who have been to me as my own daughters during the greater part of their lives;" and to each of them was left the sum of ten thousand pounds on their coming of age or marriage. There were a few legacies to old servants and local charities, five hundred pounds each to Dr. Osborne and Mr. Teesdale, his two executors, and "all the rest of my property, real and personal, of every kind whatsoever, to my beloved wife Marian."

"And my beloved wife Marian will have about fifteen thousand a-year, as near as I can fix it," said Mr. Teesdale, as he left Woolgreaves, after the reading of the will; "and if the railway people take that twenty acres off that infernal Jack Ramsay's farm, about a couple of thou' more!"

It was not to be supposed that Mr. Benthall professed himself indifferent to the splendid legacy which Gertrude had inherited. As he had been willing and anxious to take her for herself, and to share what he had with her, so he was very much pleased to find that their future would be rendered considerably less anxious, and more comfortable than they had anticipated, and in his honest open-hearted way he did not scruple to say so. The death of their uncle did not make any difference in the course of the girls' lives. They still remained with Lady Caroline, whose regard for them seemed to increase daily, and it was understood that they would continue to inhabit Chesterfield-street until Gertrude was married, and that after that event Maud would frequently return there, making it her London home, and visiting it whenever she was not staying with her sister. So at least Lady Caroline proposed, and begged Mr. Benthall to make the suggestion to

Maud at the first convenient opportunity. The opportunity occurred very shortly, and arose from Maud's saying, when they were sitting together one morning,

"I saw Mr. Joyce yesterday, George, and took occasion to ask his advice on that matter."

"And what might that matter be, Maud? There are so many matters of importance on just now, that you must be more definite."

"It is well Gertrude is not here to hear you! In your present condition there should be only one matter of any importance to you, and that of course is——"

"Our marriage—to be sure! Well, you asked Joyce—what a wonderful fellow he is, by the way; his parliamentary business does not seem the least to have interfered with his writing, and with it all he seems to find time to come up here two or three times a week."

"He has the highest regard for Lady Caroline, and the greatest respect for her judgment," said Maud.

"Naturally, so have we all," said Mr. Benthall, with a gradually spreading smile.

"Yes, but Mr. Joyce consults her in—how ridiculous you are, George! you're always saying stupid things and forgetting your subject. What were we talking about?"

"I like that; and you talk about forgetfulness! You were saying that you had spoken to Mr. Joyce about my marriage, though why you should have——"

"Don't be tiresome, you know what I mean! He perfectly agrees with you in thinking there is no necessity for postponing the marriage any further. Poor uncle has now been dead three months, and you have no necessity to consider whether Mrs. Creswell might think it too soon after that event or not!"

"We have no reason to be bound by what she would say, but I think it would be only right in Gertrude to write and tell her that the wedding is about to take place."

"That you and Gertrude must settle between you. For my part, I should not think of—— However, I confess my judgment is not to be relied on when that person is in question." Then she added in a low voice, and more as if speaking to herself, "How strange it will seem to be away from Gerty!"

Benthall heard the remark, and he took Maud's hand as he said, "But you won't be away from her, dear Maud! We have all of us talked over your future, and

Gertrude and I hope you will make your home with us, though Lady Caroline insists on claiming you for some portion of the year."

"You are all of you very good, George," said Maud; "you know how much I should love to be with you and Gerty, and what gratitude and affection I have for Lady Caroline. But I don't think the life you have proposed would exactly suit me."

"Not suit you, Maud?" cried Mr. Benthall, in astonishment; "why, what would you propose to do?"

"I cannot say exactly, though I have some ideas about it which I can't clearly express. You see I shall never be married, George, don't laugh at me, please, I'm speaking quite seriously, and there is this large sum of money which uncle left me, and which I don't think should be either squandered away or left lying idle!"

"Why, my dear, what on earth do you propose to do with the money?" asked practical Mr. Benthall.

"To put it to some good use, I hope; to use it and my own time and services in doing good, in benefiting those who need it——"

"You're not going to give it to the missionaries, or any rubbish of that kind, I trust," interrupted Mr. Benthall. "Look here, Maud, depend upon it—oh! here's her ladyship, don't say a word about it before her. Good morning, Lady Caroline! This young lady and I have been discussing the propriety of writing to Mrs. Creswell announcing Gertrude's approaching marriage."

"I don't think there can be a doubt as to the propriety of such a course," said Lady Caroline. "Of course, whatever she might say about it would not make the slightest difference to us."

"Of course not."

"But I don't think you need fear any disagreeables. Mrs. Creswell is in a very different position now to that which she held when she thought fit to behave badly to those young ladies, and their relations with her are also quite altered. And by all accounts she is quite sufficient woman of the world to understand and appreciate this."

Lady Caroline was right. In reply to Gertrude's letter announcing her marriage, came a most affectionate note from Marian to her "dearest Gertrude," congratulating her most heartily; complimenting her on her choice of a husband; delighting in the prospect of their living so near to her; *hoping to see much of them*; regretting

that her recent bereavement prevented her being present at the ceremony, or having it take place, as she should so much have wished, at Woolgreaves, and begging permission to send the enclosed, as her contribution to aid in the setting up of the new household; and the enclosure was a cheque for three hundred pounds.

Mr. Benthall winced a little when he saw the cheque, and Mr. Joyce gave a very grim smile when his friend informed him of the affair; but advised Mr. Benthall to pocket the money, which Mr. Benthall did. As has been said, he did not pretend to despise money; but he was essentially a gentleman in his notions as to the acceptance of favours. He had thought several times about that conversation with Maud, in which she had mentioned the manner in which she had wished to dispose of her fortune and her future. This had caused Mr. Benthall some uneasiness; he had no hankering after his future sister-in-law's fortune; there was nothing he would have liked so much as to see her happily married; but he did not like the idea of the money being foolishly invested in useless charity or gotten hold of by pseudo-philanthropists. A conversation which he had with Gertrude a few days before their marriage seemed, however, to do away with all his fears, and render him perfectly easy in his mind on this point. A short conversation which ended thus:

"And you're sure of it, Gerty?"

"Positive! I've thought so a long time—now I'm sure! And you must be a great goose, George, not to have noticed it yourself."

"I am not a great goose, and I certainly had some suspicions at one time; but—Well, now, that would be highly satisfactory."

"Do you think there is anything remaining from—from the other one, George?"

"From the other one? You mean from Mrs.——Not the remotest thought of her even."

"Well, then, it rests with him entirely. Wouldn't it be nice for them both?"

"It would, indeed; and for us too. Well, we'll see what can be done."

Enigmatical, but apparently satisfactory.

So George Benthall and Gertrude Creswell were married at St. James's Church in Piccadilly, by the Reverend John Bonstein, a High Church rector of a Worcestershire parish, and an old college chum of the bridegroom's. A very quiet wedding,

with Maud as the sole bridesmaid, and Joyce as best man, and Lady Caroline, and, oddly enough, Lord Hetherington, who had just come up to town from Westhope, and, calling at his sister's, had learned what was going to take place, and "thought he should like to see it, don't you know. Had never been at any wedding except his own, and didn't recollect much about that, except that—curious thing, never should forget it—when he went into the vestry to sign his name, or something of that kind, saw surplice hanging up behind the door, thought it was ghost, or something of that kind, give you his word!" So the little earl arrived the next morning at eleven at the church, and took his place in a pew near the altar, and propped his ear up with his hand to listen to the marriage service, at which he seemed to be much affected. When the ceremony was over, he joined the party in the vestry, insisted on bestowing a formal salute upon the bride, Lady Hetherington, he knew, was safely moored at Westhope, and, as some recompense for the infliction, he clasped on Gertrude's arm a very handsome bracelet, as his bridal gift.

Such a marriage promised to prove a happy one. In its early days, of course, everything was rose-coloured, those days when Maud went down to stay with George and Gertrude at the school, and when, a little later, Walter Joyce ran down for the Easter holidays to his old quarters. He was glad of the chance of seeing them once again, he said, and determined to avail himself of it; and then George Benthall looked in his face and smiled knowingly. Walter returned the grin, and added, "For it's a chance that may not happen to me again!" And when his friend looked rather blank at this, and asked him what he meant, Joyce laughed again, and finally told him that Lord Hetherington had just had a piece of patronage fall to his share, the rectory of Newmanton-by-Perringden, a lovely place in the Isle of Wight, where the stipend was not sufficiently large to allow a man with a large family to live on it, but the exact place for a parson with a little money of his own. And Lord Hetherington had inquired of Joyce whether his friend, that remarkably pleasant fellow—bless my soul, forget my own name next! him we saw married, don't you know?—whether he was not exactly the sort of fellow for this place, and would he like it? Walter thought that he was and he would; and Lord Hetherington, knowing Joyce was

going down to see his friend, bid him inquire, and if all were straight, assure Mr. Benthall that the living was his. And this was how Walter Joyce executed his commission, and this was how George Benthall heard this most acceptable news.

"By the way, what made you grin, Benthall, when I said I had come down here for my holiday to look at my old quarters?" asked Walter.

"Because I thought there might be yet another reason, which you had not stated! Anxiety to see some one here!"

"Anxiety is the wrong word. Strong wish to see you and your wife again, and——"

"My wife and I are out of the affair! Come, confess!"

"I give you my honour, I don't know what you mean!"

"Likely enough; but I'm older than you, and, parson though I am, I declare I think I've seen more of the world! Shall I tell you what brought you down here? I shall!—then I will!—to see Maud Creswell."

"Maud Creswell! What on earth should I—what—why—I mean—what, is Miss Creswell to me?"

"Simply the woman who thinks more about you than any other creature on earth. Simply the girl who is raving—head over ears in love with you. Don't pretend you don't know it. Natural instinct is too strong to allow any doubt upon that point."

"I swear you surprise me beyond belief! I swear that—Do you mean this, Benthall?"

"As a gentleman and a Christian, I've told you what I believe; and as a man of the world I tell you what I think; whether wittingly or unwittingly, you are very far gone in returning the young lady's sentiments!"

"I—that is—there's no doubt she is a girl of very superior mind, and—by Jove, Benthall, you've given a most singular twist to my holiday!"

EASTERN PRODIGES.

OF one Eastern city, in which I lived for some time, the Turks told me that at the creation of the world Allah provided three sacksful or bags of lies, and that he appropriated two of the three to that particular place, and one to all the rest of the world. I had strong reason to believe this legend.

What the Mussulmen want in inventive power, they make up for in capacity of belief. Numerous as are the cities on the surface, more numerous still (according to them) are the

cities beneath. The precise situation of most of these is unknown, but in one case it is known, and the entrance to it is visible; I have seen it, in fact.

This entrance is in the face of a mountain not many miles from the city of Ephesus. It is a flat niche, which looked to me as if some one had begun a small tunnel or drift-way, and then stopped. No doubt I must be wrong. If we could get the key of the door (and that is perhaps in the keeping of some African magician), we should find it readily swing on its hinges, and the population would stream forth. Their carriages and horses, however, they could not possibly bring with them, for the door (granting an invisible door) is too low. There, within that mountain, is a vast people in a large city, with all the establishments needful for such a concourse. They are within a few feet of us. I wonder how their streets and palaces are lighted? I have been over that mountain range, but I never could find a clue to this mystery.

It is enchanted ground, however. I remember once passing there on horseback; none but my own party in sight. High above in the air, we heard the ringing of bells and of cathedral chimes, like some carillon of Flanders! It came from no fixed station; but floated up and down in the air above us. There, we clearly heard it, awakening old thoughts of our western cities, when on some Sunday or holiday, or in the summer evening, the bells cheerily rang forth from the spires. I could see no one; but I have little doubt that this sound from the subterranean city was an echo of the bells of strings of camels moving in the distance.

The city is closed; but it may yet give forth its men. In holy Ephesus, near by, did not the seven sleepers take shelter in a cave, and did they not there remain for one hundred years, when they and their dog came out, and hardly found the way to their own neighbourhood, when, what they thought had been the hurried sleep of a night, had been the long epoch of revolutions in religion, and in the state? The street boys, who mocked at them, were their great grandchildren. Old men, to whom they appealed for information and protection, were their own grandsons. Their beards had turned grey, and their dog had become decrepit; as well he might at a time of life unknown to dogs before. The citizens of Ephesus could be little surprised to see men of past ages reappear, and treated them with honour; but the sleepers found none whom they knew, of wives, or infants, late or early friends. The seven sleepers went into a convent with their dog, and, after a further lease of mortal life, were buried in holiness in their own cave, in truthful commemoration of the event.

I heard of two aged men near Mekka, who were known to many Moslem pilgrims as being six hundred years old or more. Our own grandfathers lived when George the Third was king, not a hundred years ago; but one of these sheikhs might have seen a sheikh who by

like communication would have learnt from an eye-witness the events of two thousand years ago, when the memory of Alexander still was young, and before Julius fought for the empire of the East.

The British Association at its last meeting reduced by five thousand years the age of the Wellingtonia gigantea, and unlucky inquiries have also brought down the ages of the sheikhs. Those who had not been on the pilgrimage, fixed them at six hundred or eight hundred years; those who had been part of the way, said four hundred; I was afraid to inquire nearer, lest the old men should be reduced to boys, and I should lose the pleasure of the marvel.

I was told, however, by a learned Turk, that the truth of the matter was that a sheikh taking possession of the tent or abode of a famous sheikh, is known by that name, and that the ignorant multitude see in the perpetual succession of men of like name only one long-lived individual.

Often have aged and bowed men been pointed out to me as a hundred and fifty years old; but I could never get such an age proved. A Turk can always gain a few years in age by the shortness of the Turkish year.

A Turkish friend who had been in Roomelia told me that at a great fair in the Adrianople district he had seen an old Greek woman sitting at the foot of a tree, selling wares; her age, she said, was a hundred and fifty; but she pointed out her mother and grandmother, and said that her great-grandmother was at home in the village, being now too infirm to attend the fair. The old women got much custom, including some from my friend, but he did not go to the village to see the eldest of the family.

People so gifted as to tenure of life, are likewise privileged as to other faculties, ubiquity not excepted. There is now, or was lately, an imam in the city of Diarbekir, who on the same day, and within an hour's time, preached in the great mosques of Diarbekir and Aleppo, two or three hundred miles apart. This was attested by merchants and others, who had known him in both places. He likewise preached simultaneously in the cities of Mosul and Diarbekir.

An African friend—who made arithmetical mistakes in many matters of mine—told me some singular tales. He informed me of men and women in his part of the world who had three eyes each: and of another population having, besides the front eyes, two behind, and a tail. These gentry were cannibals. The people were named Nya Nyas, and they had teeth filed in a saw shape, and there were Nya Nyas in Turkey.

At Constantinople, in Santa Sophia, Mahomet Ghazi, the conqueror, rode on horseback to the altar, and devoted it, by the recital of the consecrated formula, to the worship of the one God of the Osmanli. The bishop who was officiating stepped into the wall, gospel in hand, and has been waiting with mitre and

crozier in the wall, four hundred years, for the return of the Byzantine empire.

Alas! the Ottomans have prophets too; they came to Byzantium under holy guidance. Eyoob or Job, a follower of the prophet, himself led the first attack on those triple walls, and falling, left his body and the prophecy of the apostle, as a pledge to those who were to achieve success. By a vision granted to a holy man, all this was revealed to Mahomet, and little reck he and his successors of the bishop of the idolators. The tomb of Eyoob, surrounded by the many sepulchres of sultans and warriors, stands on its holy ground, a monument to them of divine assurance.

But for their enemies, the bishop is not the only testimony. In the monastery of Balukli, outside the doomed walls, at the moment when the last of the Constantines died like a warrior on a mountain of slain, the monks of Balukli were frying fish. And the fish, more sensible to the events of this world than the monks, jumped off the gridiron into a sacred tank, where they still live to commemorate the dread event, and keep up hope in faithful Greeks. There they may be seen on their yearly festival; and I have seen them at other times by the offering of a silver coin. They still bear the stripes of the gridiron, as any one can witness. If a few fish can live for four hundred years, why should not the shiekhs near Mekkah live twice that time!

Though the underground people are hidden, their treasures are sometimes found. Treasure-finding is a recognised way of attaining to fortune. Just as every poor family in England thinks an unknown uncle may bring them sudden wealth from India, so the native, nay, the European resident, in Turkey, never knows but in his very garden the tent of some Lydian king may give way to the mattock, and deliver up its wealth of gold and jewels. Silver is seldom expected, for it is better to have gold and jewels. According to received notions, but unrecorded by history, the old kings of these countries had the peculiarity of burying with them immense masses of treasure, jars upon jars of gold. Why they did it, reason saith not; but who knows who may have the luck to find the store?

There are tales enough of these discovered hoards received as profound truth. I have seen the spots where the tombs were rifled, and I have heard the names of the finders. I know a beautiful pass, with clumps of poplars and planes, called the Kavakli Dere, or Poplar Dale, where a Hellander, in the last century, is recorded by the universal popular voice to have discovered a tomb and treasure. He went back to the city, and, taking a negro slave as an assistant, gradually and steadily carried off the enormous prize. This he smuggled on board the fleet in the bay, and, lest the secret should leak out, he poisoned the black before sailing; yet the full and authentic particulars seem to be just as well known as if the dead negro had revealed them. Perhaps he did, for there is no want of ghosts in the East. There

was one in a well near my house that sorely troubled the neighbourhood.

Treasure adventures are not of the past only. I have been asked to join in more than one. It is always necessary to begin by buying the piece of ground in which the treasure is. I have lost more than one certain fortune by neglecting this preliminary step. One chance I lost, was very strong. The lucky discoverer had made a midnight venture on the ground, had opened a jar, and had handled costly jewels. Fearful of being discovered, he put them back again, and came post haste to me, next morning, for fifty pounds as an instalment on the land, and to get the jewels out. He did not get the fifty pounds from me, nor, I fear, from any one else; for he died some years afterwards without bequeathing gold, silver, or diamonds, to his heirs. The secret died with him.

One is not limited to gold. Luck may turn up in other ways. Statues are very good; for a small investment you may come upon a find like a Ballarat nugget; a thousand or two thousand pounds being a small sum for an English lord to pay for a statue. In my time the finds have been few, and of limited value; though fragments are being constantly turned up. One man told me he had found, in a villa in the interior, twelve statues as good as the Apollo Belvidere, and he offered me a half share of the find, on payment of a few hundred pounds down. If any statues were found, I believe they were garden images. A Turkish proprietor told me I might dig for statues or bas-reliefs on many parts of his property; and I believe him, for he was owner of the site of a city as large as Bristol or Norwich. It was, however, an inconvenient spot to transport heavy marbles from; and when it was not covered with the winter floods, it was poisonous with malaria. Such are the drawbacks, where there are real chances!

Visions beset the Levantine of cities in the interior, desolate, but with temples perfect and statuary standing. Some will tell you that they have found such places, when driven by brigands off the beaten route: cities unmarked on the maps and unnamed by the ancient geographers and historians. They could not stay, and have wished to return; but years have passed away, and their business has not yet permitted. The columns they saw were as polished as when new, and gleaming in snowy white brightness. Tombs are ever and anon said to be opened, in which lamps were found burning, which only went out when the fresh air entered. By the last flicker of such a lamp, the king whose body the light watched, visibly faded from his life-like colour, and his solid flesh and embroidered robes fell to dust.

All is fleeting, and all may perish. How sweet is the small valley, with its vines and figs and olives, its orange and citron trees yet scenting the air, its gardened houses, its lanes and hedgerows, the trickling stream and flowering shrubs! How charming yonder street—the palace, gaily painted, as a picture by itself; the free fountain next its gate speaks of the

bounty of its founders, mindful of the future; the coffee-house gives shelter, in its shady balcony, to the reposing guests! All is calm, with just so much air as cools and mellows the sunshine, and leaves us to enjoy its brilliancy unwearied; yet in one moment shall all this, and all who live in it, be shaken to death and ruin; one second more of the frequent earthquake, one further strain of power, and even the fallen ruins are engulfed, the sea-wave rolls over the spot, and black floods burst forth from the chasms in the soil.

There was one spot I often passed before I knew its story. A cathedral with jingling bells sent up a huge tower aloft, and around its precincts quiet monks filled the numerous chambers. The shops had their busy occupants, and climbing vines made canopies over the narrow ways; many a traveller has marked the scene. One day, while I rested in a counting-house near there, an aged merchant told me how, in the great earthquake, his family had occupied the house at the corner of the cathedral yard. There they took refuge, and, after the first shocks, sought repose. His father, then a baby, lay on a mattress by a servant. Suddenly the ground opened, drawing in four men who lay next him, and, closing again, entombed them for ever. I seldom traversed the marble pavement but I thought what if the earth should yawn again, as of yore!

In mere worldly things, none know what eyes behold them, even in the open streets. Those veiled Turkish women wander about observant of all, and known to none. Yon lady in a dove-coloured ferijee, whom you cannot distinguish, is perhaps a bosom confidante of your own wife. That coarse native woman in crinoline, the suspicious Greek may fear to be the governor-general in person, disguised, watching evil-doers. He who ventures forth at night does so at the risk of encountering Haroun Alraschid and his attendant, Mesrour; and if he stop at home they may be listening under his windows. An Armenian may be scared to death by an unknown soap-vendor, who follows him about, pressing soap and conversation on him, and whom he believes to be the Sultan Caliph of Islam so arrayed, or the Grand Vizier.

What seems and is not, or what is, who knows—in the East? Philosophy and theology flourish on the borders between the real and the imaginary. The power of magic comes to relieve unsettled minds and to reassure the vulgar, who are more numerous than the select, if there be any select, who believe not in magic and its kindred sciences. Islam could not conquer magic; it only consecrated its power and furnished it with new means of incantation. The magi of the East are defunct, but the magician of Africa, the Moor, the Maghrehli, rules with traditional might, adapts the science, and weaves the cuneiform characters of Babylon into his weird alphabet. All Islam confirms the power of magic. What the magician does to find stolen napkins or *bring back lost lovers*, the dervish acknow-

ledges as potent to expel disease and restore life. The great name of God may be written in wondrous shapes. Here, such an emblem protects a house from fire; there, in a tablet it shields the tailor from the temptations of dishonesty. It is over the doorway of the mosque and the shop of the magician. The magician is not now so favoured as of old, but his shop is sometimes to be seen, with specimens in the windows of white and holy charms, horoscopes, tables of magic letters and magic squares, ineffable names. I remember one fellow's shop, and he had a talking parrot hanging over the door. An incredulous passenger remarked to me that the parrot was cleverer than the magician; but the magician drove an excellent trade.

In warding off evil, securing fickle love, promising children, curing sickness, and discovering theft, the talisman-dealer, the magician, and the astrologer, yet thrive throughout the East. The gipsy is a missionary to be found in every house. There is nothing too impossible for credulity. A modern conjuror drew five francs a head from a large community by sending round his *carte-de-visite*, representing him with his head at his feet. An intelligent audience of educated persons was highly indignant that this part of the performance did not come off.

One marvel I have read in a veracious book: to wit, that the heads of beheaded ladies and slaves are to be seen floating down the Bosphorus in hampers daily, wherefore people are not allowed to catch fish, and are afraid to eat fish. I have eaten fish and seen hampers, but I never had the good luck to see a hamper of ladies' heads, or to meet with any one who had. One head would raise a mob of the women of Constantinople.

AS THE CROW FLIES.

DUE EAST. YARMOUTH.

YARMOUTH, with its population of thirty thousand herring catchers and eaters, stands on the confluence of the Yar, the Waveney, and the Bure, in the centre of a low sandy peninsula, surrounded by those rivers and the German ocean. The scenery on the Bure, as the crow approaches Yarmouth, strikes that restless bird as peculiarly Dutch. Towards the sea, the pumps driven by wind are superseded by scoop wheels driven by more resolute and active steam. There are cattle swimming across the river at Runham and Mantby, where the banks are protected with flints; the water becomes gay with flashing wherries; and presently there appear houses with quaint gables and dormer windows, lines of trees, and masts of ships rising among roofs; presently sand-hills glisten against the sun, and the curious crow's nest look-out at Caistor shows conspicuously against the sky. More gardens, orchards, and boats, an old round tower, with a conical roof, on the left bank, and the crow has Yarmouth all before him where to choose.

The sea has not encroached upon the Yar-

mouth sands since the reign of Elizabeth. About Cromer way, the earth is yielding to the sea in all directions; here at Yarmouth the earth is conquering. The theory (and it gives a curious notion of the vast agencies at work in reshaping the outer surface of the earth) is this: only a portion of the great tidal wave of the Atlantic passes up the channel through the Straits of Dover; the great mass moving more swiftly up the west, sweeps round the Orkneys, and pours down southward between Norway and Scotland. Wherever, therefore, a river stream breaks a passage through this southward-beating pulsation of the great ocean's heart, there sand-banks are deposited at the angle where the two forces meet.

Yarmouth, first mentioned in 1081, was originally a mere cluster of tarry fishermen's huts on a sand-bank at the mouth of the Yare. Its first charter, establishing Yarmouth as a sort of herring kingdom, was granted in 1108, and confirmed by successive sovereigns until 1702; the year before Queen Anne came to the throne. Henry the Second allowed a wall to be built, enclosing the houses on the land side. The serviceable old rampart is still to be traced through the quaint narrow streets of Yarmouth. At Ramp Row the wall is supported within by arched recesses seven feet deep. The poor people, who here live in tumble-down tenements, use the recesses as pantries or bedrooms. "A Ramp Row goose," is the Yarmouth metonym for a herring. Close by the Priory national schools, there is more of the wall, while a ruined tower is to be found in an adjoining nursery garden. Southward it runs to a third tower, now used as a dwelling-house. The wall appears again in solid, unimpaired flintwork facing the North Denes. It is cut in two by a street, but reappears in the rear of a yard where anchors are stored; and presently the versatile rampart forms one side of a rope-walk. It turns up often again behind hovels, sheds, stables, and smoke houses: such are the crow's flying glimpses of it.

French and Flemish Protestant refugees, escaping from the Guises and from Spanish Philip, established themselves at Yarmouth during the reigns of James and Charles, and gave to the crowds in the lanes of this Norfolk Genoa, a republican and anti-state church tone. Bradshaw, the Puritan law sergeant, who presided at King Charles's trial, and who declared with his dying breath that if the deed were to do again he would do it, resided for some time at the Star Inn, Yarmouth.

On July 9, 1642, Yarmouth had declared openly for the Parliament, and was thenceforward harassed by the Lowestoft Cavaliers' cruisers. The consequence was that when the tide turned Yarmouth had to turn, and within a few days of each other presented enthusiastic addresses to Richard Cromwell and Charles the Second. The swarthy "mutton-eating" king came to the town for some reason or other in 1671, and having received a present of three golden herrings, dubbed three of the richest herring sellers *knights*.

At various periods all sorts of great men embarked and disembarked at Yarmouth. But the most honoured name among them is that of Nelson. He landed on this Norfolk coast close to his own birthplace, November 6, 1800, after the great victory of the Nile, when he had captured all the French fleet except four ships, and blown up L'Orient in spite of the batteries of Aboukir. The memory of the great admiral is treasured at the Star Hotel, once the residence of the Howards, then of Bradshaw. "The Nelson Room" is still the palladium of the building. In this oak-panelled chamber, with its arched fillets and diaper work, its quaint female figures with animals' heads, and its scroll-bordered ceiling with pendants, Nelson once dined; and his portrait painted by Keymer, a quaker admirer, still hangs on the wall.

Yarmouth has been often compared to Genoa, and a writer, by no means unknown to the public, has named the many-alleyed town "the Norfolk Gridiron." The five principal streets are crossed at right angles by one hundred and fifty-six rows or narrow lanes, which are, on an average, about eight feet wide. The reason of this minute subdivision of street way is that in the old time the teeming city was pressed in by a wall on the north, south, and east sides two hundred and forty yards long, and on the west by a wall two thousand and thirty yards long. Within this box the population lay, to use a simile not inappropriate to the herring town, like herrings in a barrel. These little lanes are so narrow that you can touch both walls by stretching out your hands while passing. They necessitated a special low, long, narrow vehicle, first introduced in Henry the Seventh's time, and hence popularly known as "Harry-carries." These Dutch-looking trolley carts are sledges twelve feet long by three feet six inches broad; are mounted on wheels two feet nine inches high; and are drawn by one horse, the driver standing on the cross-staves. A topographical writer of 1777 shows how simple Norfolk society was at that era, when many of these Harry-carries, painted red, green, and blue, plied for hire, and were let out to visitors wishing to drive to the Fort, the Quay, or the Denes.

Yarmouth quay has been compared to the Boompjes at Rotterdam, with its commingled trees, masts, and houses. The Dutch Clock, the quaintest spot on the banks of the Yare, is an old sixteenth-century building, now used as a public library and an office for toll receivers and Haven commissioners; it was formerly a place where Dutch and Flemish refugees celebrated in quiet and phlegmatic gratitude their morning prayers; and here Brinsley, the non-conformist, when driven from St. Nicholas church, preached the tenets of toleration. In olden times the town waits assembled on the roof on summer Sunday evenings. The old clock, that has seen out many generations, still counts the hours; and the ancient carved stone mariner's compass, three feet in diameter, remains in front of the old building.

The crow perceives that the houses in the market-place are old, and have a character of their own; also, that the fish-market displays on its shields the half fishes, half lions, which are the heraldic glory of Yarmouth. The Fisherman's Hospital, a low, quadrangular building, with curious gables, dates back to the last year of William of Orange. A carved ship, tossed ceaselessly on stormy waves, is placed over an inner doorway; and a large statue of Charity guards a contribution-box in the middle of the court. No ancient mariner is admitted within this tranquil precinct until he has battled the storms and waves of this troublesome world three score years.

The four rustling avenues of lime-trees, delicious when in blossom, lead to the old priory church of St. Nicholas, the great saint of the Norfolk fishermen. The enormous building, which will hold six thousand if tightly and professionally packed, is the great composite of many pious ages. In 1338 the bachelors of Yarmouth began to build an aisle in this church, but were stayed by a plague. After that, it boasted of seventeen chapels and the right of sanctuary. It has known various desecrations. For more than three hundred years the ignoble corporation picked up all the brasses and melted them into weights. Still worse, a little later, all the grave-stones were drawn, like so many teeth, and shamefully sent to Newcastle to be shaped into grindstones. During the Puritan period three congregations met at the same time in this enormous church. The partitions dividing the three enclosures were only finally removed about twenty years ago.

After the "Ballast Keel," with its fourteenth-century arch and Jacobean ceiling—the ruins of the Franciscan friary in the road leading to Gaol-street—and the old house with herring-bone masonry in George and Dragon-row—the most remarkable bit of antiquity in Yarmouth, is Mr. Palmer's house on the quay, built 1596; the date appears on a chimney-piece carving. This house once belonged to John Carter, a bailiff of Yarmouth in the parliamentary times. Cromwell often visited him, and his son married Mary Ireton, daughter of the stern general. Tradition says that in this house was held the final consultation of the parliamentary leaders, at which they decided upon the death of the king; that the principal Puritan officers assembled in the oak-pannelled drawing-room up-stairs for privacy; and that it was strictly commanded that no person should come near the room except one man appointed to attend. The dinner (tradition adds) was ordered at four o'clock, and was put off from time to time till past eleven at night: when the council came down to a very short repast, and immediately all set off post, some for London, and some for the quarters of the army.

Whatever wind blows, blows hard here, and the friendly lights of Caistor and Gorleston are too often powerless to save the driven vessel. *In 1692 out of two hundred sail of those colliers which always make Yarmouth their favourite roadstead on their way from Newcastle, one*

hundred and forty were battered to pieces on the Yare shoals. In May, 1660, upwards of two hundred fishermen were lost here. Nor, in mentioning real Yarmouth wrecks, must we forget the novelist's or the poet's wrecks. It was off this place that Robinson Crusoe got into trouble; here, too, a certain person named Steerforth was overtaken by his destiny. Indeed, the harbour planned by Joas Johnson, a Dutchman, in 1567, the south pier (two thousand feet long, and built on oak trunks), the leafy Commercial quay, the south quay, improved by Sir John Rennie, and still more than all these, the Britannia jetty (which cost five thousand pounds), recalls to the crow other passages of David Copperfield's Yarmouth career, as, for example, his picture of the fishermen's quarter. "I smelt the fish, and pitch, and tar, and oakum, and saw the sailors walking about, and the carts jingling up and down over the stony lanes, bestrewn with bits of chip and little hillocks of sand; past gasworks, ropewalks, boat-builders' yards, shipwrights' yards, shipbreaker's yards, riggers' lofts, smiths' forges, and a great litter of such places, until we came out upon a dull waste and desolate flat." In this quarter tarry palings are hung with blackish brown nets, and tar-coloured sails are everywhere being dried or patched, rolled up, or unfolded. Here are herring yawls, and mackerel boats, and those sturdy cobbles that come from Whitby and Scarborough, bringing periwinkles and pickled mushrooms. Here, too, are the decked boats that brave the wolfish gales of the North Sea, and that used in old times even to defy the crushing ice floes of Greenland, in search of the whale.

Herrings are not alone the arms; they are the very legs of Yarmouth. The town lives on them, and stands by them. In 1798 Yarmouth had only sixteen fishing boats, Lowestoft twenty-four, and the Yorkshire men forty. In 1833 there were one hundred Norfolk boats (chiefly Yarmouth) to the forty or fifty of Yorkshire, the whole employing a capital of two hundred and fifty thousand pounds. In these present times, a recent able writer says, there are two hundred Yarmouth boats and forty Yorkshire and Sussex cobbles, catching every season six or seven score million herrings, of the value of two hundred thousand pounds. The mackerel fishing employs one hundred boats and fourteen hundred men and women. Every mackerel lugger costs seven or eight hundred pounds, and carries eighty or a hundred nets, each twenty yards long by eight and a half broad. Every herring boat is worth from six hundred to a thousand pounds. It is calculated that half a million of money is, in one way or other, invested at Yarmouth in reaping the fish harvest. The herring harvest commences at the end of September, and the glittering millions of over population with which the North Sea then teems are dragged out for ten consecutive weeks. A recent topographical traveller has collected with patient care and skill some curious close-pressed facts on the subject of Yarmouth's ceaseless industry. On those rough October nights, when the sands froth and boil crimson, in the slant

light of the red beacon, these Norfolk seas are literally coagulated with herrings, and the nets bring them up in tumbling heaps of loose and spangled silver. A single Yarmouth boat has been known to bring in from twelve to sixteen lasts, each last being ten barrels, or ten thousand herrings!

Oak-logs, the crow is informed, are used to smoke the best herrings; but the Birmingham bloater being of a lower caste is seasoned by hazel wood and fir loppings. A smoke house, half malt-kiln, half "oast" house, is a large oblong tower, forty or fifty feet high, without floors. Above are transverse compartments divided by partitions of horizontal rails. In these open racks or "loves" lie the laths or "speets." The herring, arriving by cart from the beach to fulfil his destiny for the good of a higher species, is first thrown with his fellows into a brick recess, sprinkled with salt, and left for several days. The duration of the vaporous purgatory depends on the destination of the fish. If he be a Belgravian bloater, a bloated aristocrat, he merely hangs twenty-four hours until he begins to swell with self-importance, and is prepared for packing; if a "Straits man" for the Mediterranean ports, he lingers longer; if he be a mere black herring, for the chandlers, or the tally shop, he serves his full ten days, and emerges hard, dark, and salt. On emerging from their bath the herrings are run through the gills by gangs of skilful women called "ryvers," who "speet" them on long sticks; eight women speeting eight lasts of herrings (thirteen thousand two hundred herrings to a last) in a day. For each last the women get three shillings and ninepence. The speets are then placed by climbing men on the loves, tier by tier, until the smoke-house is full. The fire is then lighted, the oil begins to distil, and the herrings slowly turn yellow, dusky orange, dingy red, or black, according to the duration of the smoking. "Last scene of all that ends this strange eventful history," comes the packer, who removes the speets, and strips the fish into the barrels in the radiating order in which they are to lie, until each barrel has its regulated seven hundred and fifty (thirteen dozen to the hundred).

The scenes on the old jetty when the mackerel boats are coming in and the fish auctions are beginning, are very picturesque. This moment there is nothing visible but a few bald flag-staves marking the auction stands, tangles of straw, piles of madder-coloured nets, heaps of baskets and empty oily tubs, some old mermaids in blue aprons, and some old fishermen in oilskin dreadnaughts and long boots. Some tan-coloured sails lop round in sight. Instantly the jetty comes to life. The ferry boats mounted with iron skates are shoved down to the water and warped out; the tubs are also rolled down and got ready. The boats come in, crowded with mackerel baskets. The nautical women gather round the auctioneer, who stands with a red book in one hand, and a bell in the other. He rings the bell, and announces, with true Saxon brevity: "Here I

have so many hundred and so many quarters at so much a hundred." The baskets are instantly emptied into tubs half full of water, and the women wash and pack the perishable fish in layers (sixty mackerel to a basket), six score to the hundred, the largest fish on the top. Straw is spread over the fish, down go the lids of the baskets, scaly hands tie the reddened strings, scaly hands lift the loads into quick railway carts, and off they fly to expectant London and hungry Birmingham.

But the editorial trumpet sounds, and the crow must strike off towards Cromer and the northern part of the North Sea: first recalling that on this dangerous north shore, brave Captain Manby, in 1808, tested his apparatus for saving the crews of stranded ships by throwing them a line attached to a shot from a mortar. By night, fireworks are used with this apparatus, which burst at the height of three hundred yards, and diffuse a clear light over every object, so that the aim can be properly directed. In twenty years the Manby system saved fifty-eight vessels, and four hundred and ten human beings. Turner, never tired of the sea, painted a fine grave picture of the Yarmouth sands at twilight, with the Manby mortar just discharging its shell.

Swift now on the wing over the Denes—broad green levels, with dull patches here and there of loose sand, sprinkled with selfheal, stonecrop, and sand-wort. Poising over the Nelson Column, our black friend, who needs no staircases, no towers along the steep, catches at one glance of his intelligent eye, miles of the flat level across Breyden water, along the Yare, and sees from Gorleston heights to the Suffolk cliffs, stretching towards Lowestoft. Yarmouth way lies the great sapphire pavement of the sea, speckled with flocks of brown fishing-boats. He sees, too, the light-ships marking the entrance, and a tossing line of froth where the shoals begin, as he looks towards Amsterdam.

TWO SONNETS.

I. DESPENDENCY.

My life is as a weary bridge of sighs,
"A palace and a prison on each hand:"
But I have left my youth's bright palaces,
And passed the portals of love's fairy land,
And entered on that dark and dreary path
Which every earth-born traveller must tread,
Wherein the soul no joy or solace hath,
No refuge from its anguish or its dread,
Save in that prison-house the grave.
Regret, remorse, for time mispent and gone,
Jailors, whose cruelty I dare not brave,
Walk at my side, and goad me sternly on,
While through the arches moan continually
The stranded wrecks of life's fast ebbing sea.

II. REPROOF.

Oh, say not thus; thy life is as a stair,
Of which the first steps lean upon the earth;
With each ascent you rise to purer air:
Below are clouds; above the stars have birth.
Though fair and sunny Earth's alluring bowers,
Break through her dear enchantments and pursue
Thy path right onward; all those fruits and flowers
O'er which thou treadest now shall bloom anew,
And live eternal through eternal hours!
And as you higher climb, and from your view

Earth's soft green pleasure fades, faint not, nor fear.
Though solemn in its loneliness the road,
Death's stars shine high above thee, bright and clear,
And, won the height, the last step leads to God!

A GENTLEMAN OF THE PRESS.

IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

It is all very well to be "a gentleman of the press," in the quiet times of Queen Victoria, but it was not so very well in the troublous days of good Queen Elizabeth, or those, scarcely less troublous, of good Queen Anne. Those who by the pen and the printing machine offended Queen Elizabeth, or her administration, or any member thereof, might, and did, have their hands cut off, their tongues slit, or their necks subjected to the unpleasant process which rids the world of murderers. In Queen Anne's days, it was not so bad, but still it was bad enough; for the pillory and long imprisonment were not agreeable commentaries upon a mere difference of political or theological opinion. And of all the gentlemen of the press who ever lived, DANIEL DEFOE—whose lot was cast in the middle term, between the disgrace and adversity of the Elizabethan and the honour and prosperity of the Victorian era—may serve as a doughty specimen of the class that has done so much for the liberty of England. And Defoe was not merely a gentleman of the press, and a journalist of rare powers, but a literary genius of the highest rank. Never since books began to be printed, was there so popular a story as Robinson Crusoe, and that not alone in the language in which it was first written, but in that of every European tongue into which it has been translated. Next to the Bible, the Arabian Nights Entertainments, and Æsop's Fables, the not altogether fictitious history of the shipwrecked mariner of Hull is, perhaps, the best-known book in the world. Had its author produced nothing else, he would have established a claim to a foremost place in the illustrious company of the English authors who have made the world happier by their genius. But this book, delightful as it is, is not the only one which England owes to the sound sense and cultivated intellect of Daniel Defoe. Robinson Crusoe enshrines him in our hearts, but hundreds of tracts and volumes on all the great questions of his day and ours, in the discussion of which he was invariably found on the side of common sense and justice, mark him out as a grandee of literature. His mind was alike logical and dramatic, and to sum up his personal and intellectual character, he may be briefly

described as a brave, simple, honest, industrious, far-seeing man of genius, one of the noble souls who, with the greatest amount of brain as well as heart, have helped to build up the liberties of England, risking reputation, fortune, and life in the great struggle of the people to achieve the civil and religious liberty which arbitrary power would resist or deny. It is true that long after all the heats and animosities which this great writer excited in his lifetime, have been cooled and laid at rest in the grave, a spot has been discovered on his hitherto unsullied name. Before discussing the spot in question, which may not, after all, be so very large or so very black as those who love to disparage greatness because they themselves are little, have sought to represent it, let us discourse upon the life and character of Defoe, as if no such discovery had been made, until we come to the period of his career when it is necessary to mention it, along with those discoveries of his hitherto unknown and unsuspected writings which grew out of it.

The father of Daniel Defoe was one James Foe, a wealthy butcher and well-known Dissenter, in Cripple-gate, in the city of London. His son Daniel was born in the year 1661. Daniel, who did not begin to call himself Defoe till he was twenty-five, received a good education, and, in due course of time, was placed by his father in the establishment of a hosier. At the age of twenty-four he was enabled, by his father's assistance, to start in business on his own account in Freeman's-court, Cornhill. But his mind was not wholly in the shop, and his heart as well as his intellect was stirred by the great events of his time. Believing that the Protestant religion was endangered by the bigotry and misgovernment of James the Second, and sympathising warmly in the objects of the gallant but luckless enterprise of the Duke of Monmouth, the gallant hosier, leaving for awhile his business to his assistants, or shutting up shop altogether (for on neither of these two points have his biographers been able to tell us anything authentic), took up arms in support of the Protestant Prince, and fought in the ranks as a private soldier. "The religion and liberties of his country, and especially of the Dissenters, were at stake," says MR. LEE, whose Life and Recently Discovered Writings of Defoe form the text upon which we write; "the agitation among his friends in the city of London was great; his ardent love of free-

dom led him to join with them, and, carried away by the tide of popular excitement, he armed and followed the Duke of Monmouth's standard." This was all very well for a patriot, but it was not very well for a tradesman. Nor was it the only time during his commercial career that he grasped the sword or shouldered the gun as a rebel and a revolutionist. A short time previous to the flight of James the Second from the country he had endeavoured to betray, and the temper and character of whose people he so egregiously misunderstood, Defoe, unable to confine his attention to his business, threw in his lot with the Revolution. No sooner did the news of the landing and advance of the Prince of Orange arrive in London, than Defoe, then in his twenty-seventh year, mounted his horse, and rode out, well armed and equipped, to meet the army of liberation at Henley-on-Thames. Though he had no occasion to fight for the cause he had adopted, he was ready to do so, and marched back with the army towards the capital. On the 18th of December, the Prince of Orange made his triumphal entry into London, and Defoe, full of the greatness of the occasion, narrates, "that it was with inexpressible joy that he heard delivered, at the bar of the House of Lords, in a message from the Commons, by Mr. Hampden, of Buckinghamshire, 'that it is inconsistent with the constitution of this Protestant kingdom to be governed by a Popish prince.'" And Defoe not only offered his sword when it might have been needed, but for years afterwards gave his time, his intellect, and his pen to the cause he had at heart, writing and publishing a series of tracts and pamphlets in support of the principles of the Revolution.

After a time his commercial affairs began, as was not at all extraordinary under the circumstances, to be seriously disordered; and in 1692 an angry creditor took out a commission of bankruptcy against him. This, however, was soon superseded on the petition of other creditors, who had faith in Defoe's probity, by whose means a composition was effected. Ten years afterwards, when Defoe had made many enemies by his writings among the Jacobite party, and even among his own friends, by a satire entitled *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters*, a political opponent bore striking testimony to his commercial integrity. "I must do one piece of justice to the man," says Turchin, in a Dialogue between a Dissenter and *Observer*, "*though I love him*

no better than you do. It is this; that meeting a gentleman in a coffee-house when I, and everybody else, were railing at him, the gentleman took us up with this short speech. Gentlemen, said he, I know this Defoe as well as any of you, for I was one of his creditors, who compounded with him, and discharged him fully. Several years afterwards he sent for me, and though he was clearly discharged, he paid me all the remainder of the debt, voluntarily and of his own accord, and he told me that so far as God should enable him, he intended to do the same with everybody. When he had done, he desired me to set my hand to a paper to acknowledge it, which I readily did, and found a great many names in the paper before me; and I think myself bound to own it, though I am no friend to the book he wrote, no more than you are."

The hosiery business had not prospered with Defoe the soldier; neither did that of a trade in skins and furs, in which he afterwards became interested. His thoughts were on affairs of state, and not in his ledger and daybook. To aid him to pay his way in the world, he accepted, about the year 1700, the office of secretary to a company established near Tilbury in Essex, for the manufacture of bricks and pantiles. He ultimately became owner of this concern, and devoted to its interest as much time as he could spare from the cause, by no means assured in that day, of religious liberty. Had he left off writing, and attended solely to his bricks and pantiles he might have become a rich, a prosperous, and contented citizen; and left a fortune, though possibly not a name, behind him. But Defoe was a born political genius, and was never happy but when he had the pen in his hand, using it in defence of the right, in denunciation of the wrong, sometimes earnestly, sometimes jestingly, but always forcibly. He had the art of placing himself so exactly in the position of his fictitious characters, as to make the world believe them to be real. His unlucky satire, *A Short Way with the Dissenters*, in which he assumed the part of an intolerant persecutor who would serve the Dissenters of England as Torquemada did the religious malcontents of Spain, deceived both parties. The high Tories of the time at first believed the book to be genuine, and were never weary of chanting its praises. The Dissenters also believed it to be the true utterances of a persecutor who meant what he said, and were equally loud in its condemnation. But when it came to be known that Defoe was the author, its real object was

apparent, and the High Church party, indignant that they should have been the victims of such a hoax, clamoured lustily for the author's punishment. The Tory government of the day no sooner discovered that its grave irony was to be taken in a contrary sense, from that in which it appeared to be written, than they resolved to crush the author, if possible, by a State prosecution. Defoe fled, and the government advertised him in the London Gazette of the 10th of January, 1703, offering a reward of thirty pounds for his apprehension. He was described as "a middle sized, spare man, about forty years old, of a brown complexion, and dark brown coloured hair—but wearing a wig," and as having "a hooked nose, a sharp chin, grey eyes, and a large mole near his mouth." Defoe lay in hiding for some time, to the serious injury of his business; but ultimately surrendered to take his trial, with the hope that no punishment would be inflicted upon him, for a piece of political irony. In this hope, as will appear hereafter, he was grievously disappointed; and the pantile works, in the absence of their directing head, had to be closed and the manufacture discontinued. In this venture Defoe lost, or became responsible for, about three thousand five hundred pounds.

After this collapse, trade and commerce knew the brave man no more. He had long ago discovered his true vocation, and henceforth he determined to make it his only one. Trade, as he knew to his cost, required a constant and unfaltering allegiance, if the trader were not to flounder into bankruptcy; and such allegiance it was impossible for him to bestow. For the future his pen became his main if not his sole reliance for his daily bread and the support of his family. Here let us take leave of him in his character of a tradesman: with the sole remark, that if he were unfortunate, he was never dishonest. He failed, it is true; but without a stain upon his integrity, and in the case of the brick and pantile manufactory, his ruin was the work of his political enemies, and not in any degree of his own commercial mismanagement. And furthermore it must be recorded to his honour, that not only his brick and pantile debts, but every other debt contracted in his commercial life, was discharged to the uttermost farthing—before the strong soul shuffled off this mortal coil, and rested in peace from its manifold labours.

Had he lived in our day, Defoe would most probably have been the editor of some great daily or weekly newspaper, or the

writer of its most powerful leading articles. In his day, to a great extent, the pamphlet performed the functions of the newspaper; and as a pamphleteer he occupied the very first rank among his contemporaries. From the Revolution of 1688 to the accession of George the First, his pen was never idle. Unavowedly and unknown, he was equally busy through the whole reign of George the First, and a portion of that of George the Second. During all this time he employed himself on every subject, no matter what, that interested the crown, the parliament, or the people. In attack or in defence, in solemn earnest, or in grave and sometimes grim banter, he was always powerful, and always just. And it was known of him in his own day, as is remembered to his honour in ours, that he never attacked the weak and the defenceless. "From being a boxing English boy," as he said of himself in an autobiographical passage in his Review, "I learned this early piece of generosity, not to hit my enemy when he is down."

Defoe wrote many pamphlets and papers in support of the principles of which King William was the representative and the defender, and soon became known, at least by name, to that monarch, as one of the staunchest supporters of his throne against the reactionary Jacobites. The services thus rendered, recommended him to the government as a powerful writer who ought both to be encouraged and employed, and in the year 1694, as he himself states, he was, without the least application on his own part, appointed accountant to the commissioners for the glass duty, in which service he continued till the glass duty was abolished in 1699. This employment, while it lasted, never interfered with his literary work. On the first of August, 1700, there appeared what Defoe called "a vile abhorred pamphlet, in very ill verse, written by one Mr. Turchin, and called The Foreigners; in which the author (who he was I then knew not) fell personally upon the king himself, and then upon the Dutch nation. And after having reproached his majesty with crimes that his worst enemies could not think of without horror, he sums up all in the odious name of a Foreigner. This filled me with a kind of rage against the book, and gave birth to a trifle which I never could hope should have met with so general an acceptance as it did: I mean The True Born Englishman." This work, was the first, known to be by Defoe, which achieved great popularity. It took the town by storm, and not only ran rapidly through several

legal editions to the author's profit, but was pirated on every hand, and sold in penny copies at the corner of every street. "It is very probable," says Mr. Lee, "that from the invention of printing to 1701, an equal number of copies of any book had never been sold within the space of one year."

This tract did more for Defoe than make him popular with the multitude; it gained him the friendship of the king, the man whom of all others in England, he most esteemed, and in whose cause he had wrought and fought, and the success of whose principles he looked upon as identified with the happiness of his country. The king sought and obtained his friendship, and was accustomed to consult him privately on affairs of state; but Defoe never divulged their confidence, and he only informed the world incidentally after the king's death, that on the subject of the French war of 1703, to which he had opposed himself in several pamphlets, the king asked him, this war having been irrevocably determined upon, to draw up a scheme of operations by which it might be made as little onerous as possible to the people, in which he recommended an attack against the Spanish West Indies, which the king fully approved. Had his majesty lived Defoe was to have had an honourable part in its execution. Reverting after the king's death to the kindnesses he had received at his hands, Defoe wrote in his Review, "I am not at all vain in saying I had the honour to know more of his majesty than some of those who insulted him knew of his house, and I think, if my testimony was able to add to his bright reputation, I could give such particulars of his being not a man of morals only, but of serious piety and religion as few kings in the world, in these latter ages of time, can come up to."

The death of King William was a serious blow to the rising political fortunes of Defoe. But there was much work to do, and he did it in his own way, though doubtful whether the favour of the new court would be extended to a man who was so strong an opponent of the pretensions of her majesty's Roman Catholic father, to which her majesty herself, Protestant as she was, was supposed to have a leaning. The Whigs who served King William were dismissed, and a Tory ministry appointed within two months after Queen Anne's accession; facts that prefigured to Defoe that a stormy time was before the nation, and before him as an individual whose duty and avocation and sole business in life it

was to keep the nation true to the principles of the Revolution. The opening of the year 1702 had seen Defoe the honoured and confidential friend of a powerful sovereign, and apparently on the high road to fame and fortune. The king's death changed all. The court knew him not, except to mistrust him. The new House of Commons, if not in a Jacobite majority, had a majority opposed to the Whig and Protestant principles, that drove out James the Second and seated William the Third on the throne. This majority favoured Roman Catholicism and English High Churchism, and was bitterly opposed to the Dissenters, of whom Defoe was the most eminent champion. But he held on the even tenor of his way; convinced, and as he said "positively assured," that he was in the right. Queen Anne had been less than six months' upon the throne when Defoe published the pamphlet already alluded to, *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters*. Defoe's intention, when he eventually surrendered to take his trial for this publication, was to justify his pamphlet, and to prove that everything he had said in jest and irony, as to the best mode of exterminating the Dissenters, had been said in solemn earnest by leading members of the High Church party. But he was prevailed upon to withdraw the plea of justification, and simply confessing the authorship, to throw himself upon the mercy of the queen. The result proved that he acted unwisely. There was to be no mercy on this occasion. He was sentenced to pay a fine of two hundred marks, to stand three times in the pillory, to be imprisoned during the queen's pleasure, and to find sureties for his good behaviour for seven years. The sentence was intended to be an infamous one; and it *was* infamous—not to Defoe, but to the government which pronounced it. He was removed from the dock to Newgate, there to remain for twenty days, until he was placed in the pillory. Even in this dreary interval his pen was not idle, for he found time and means to complete and send to the printer, a work on which he had been previously engaged, entitled *The Shortest Way to Peace and Union*, by the author of *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters*. The object of this tract was to reconcile the Church to the Dissenters, and the Dissenters to the Church. "Thus the noble Christian peacemaker," as Mr. Lee well says, "endeavoured to return good for evil to the enemies who had endeavoured to crush him, and to the friends who had

forsaken him." He also composed in this interval his celebrated Hymn to the Pillory, in which he placed his persecutors in a moral pillory, worse than the physical pillory, in which he was to stand; and gibbeted their names, not for a day only, but for all time.

Both of these works were published on the 29th of July, on the very day on which he was first made a public spectacle before the Royal Exchange in Cornhill. But a strong reaction had set in in favour of this martyr of liberty, and lest any Tory in the crowd should think it incumbent to pelt Defoe with eggs, cabbages, filth, or stones, with which it was the custom to pelt the petty criminals exhibited in the pillory, the crowd merely pelted his feet with summer flowers, and formed a guard of honour to protect him from insult or injury, ornamented the steps and beams of the pillory with wreaths and garlands, drank to his health, long life, and prosperity, in bumpers of flowing liquor; intermingling their expressions of gratitude to Defoe with shouts of execration against the judge who had sentenced him, and the ministers of the crown who had incited his prosecution. On the following day he was again placed in the pillory, opposite the conduit in Cheapside, and on the third day on the Westminster side of Temple Bar, on both of which occasions his shame was turned into his triumph by the crowd, and he whom the pillory had failed to shame, sanctified the very pillory by his bravery and innocence. The Hymn to the Pillory, which in a manner recommitted the offence which had brought the author face to face with the law, had a large sale among the crowd assembled to witness his exposure. Expostulating with the Pillory, he indignantly bade it speak to the people and

Tell them the men that placed him there
Are scandals to the times,
Are at a loss to find his guilt,
And can't commit his crimes.

The government was politic enough to take no notice of this new composition.

After these three exposures, which might have been called ovations, Defoe was re-consigned to Newgate, where, it is to be supposed, he had private accommodation not accorded to ordinary prisoners, inasmuch as he continued his literary labours in the cause which he had at heart, and to support a wife and six children by their sale. Having, as it seemed, ruined Defoe pecuniarily, the Tory government of Queen Anne bethought themselves whether, in his misery and distress, he might not be

bought over to their side, and whether, for a valuable consideration, release from prison, and the promise of employment, he might not be induced to betray the confidence of the late king. The Earl of Nottingham appears to have either gone or sent to him in Newgate on this errand; but Defoe, to use his own brave words, "scorned to come out of Newgate at the price of betraying a dead master, or discovering those things which nobody would have been the worse (or the better) for." During the next six or eight months, while he lay in prison, he wrote, or published, having previously written, a whole library of pamphlets, the mere list of which, if it prove nothing else, proves a marvellous industry,—a marvellous courage; and a soul that no misfortune, or adverse circumstance, could daunt, as long as there was work to undertake in the service of the people. These pamphlets, amounting in all to sixteen, and supplemented before his release from prison by almost as many more, were but the recreations of the massive intellect that still craved for work. On the 19th of February appeared the first number of a weekly periodical, entitled *The Review*, started by Defoe, and carried on by him, alone and unaided, and in the midst of all but incredible difficulties, for nine years afterwards. It was published once a week for the first two months, afterwards twice a week, and finally, when he had recovered his liberty, thrice a week; and claims notice, not only as being Defoe's, but as being the forerunner, and to some extent the model, of the weekly reviews and newspapers of the present day. While thus working, striving, and, like the equally brave John Milton before him, "bating no jot of heart or hope," a gleam of better fortune shone into his prison. Legion's Address to the Lords, supporting the House of Peers in their hostility to the reactionary policy of the Jacobite and Tory majority in the Commons, excited more than ordinary attention, and was generally suspected, but not positively known, to be Defoe's. It has never been included in the list of his works, but is traced to his pen by Mr. Lee, on what appear to be satisfactory grounds. However this may be, the pamphlet did good service to the Protestant and liberal cause, and, like a straw upon the wind, showed the way in which the current of opinion was blowing. Towards the end of the month in which it appeared a ministerial crisis occurred: the Tory administration was dismissed, the Whigs returned to power: and Harley, afterwards Earl of

Oxford, became prime minister. Harley had been but a short time in office when he endeavoured to procure Defoe's release, with the view of securing his services as a paid writer for the new government. His efforts were not immediately successful. Harley, who only knew Defoe by his writings, as Defoe only knew Harley by his public character and services, was slow at the work of release, on account of obstacles in the way, but was steady and sure; and the case having been personally brought under the notice of Queen Anne, "her Majesty," as Defoe narrates, "was pleased particularly to inquire into my circumstances and family, and by the Lord Treasurer Godolphin to send a considerable supply to my wife and family, and to send me the prison money to pay my fine and the expenses of my discharge. Here," he adds, "is the foundation on which I first built my first sense of duty to her Majesty's person, and the indelible bond of gratitude to my first benefactor (Harley)."

Here let us leave Defoe for this while; in the new sunshine of favour and appreciation that was bursting upon him when his prospects seemed the gloomiest.

LONG HAIR AND SHORT.

ST. PAUL held that it was a shame to a man to wear his hair long, and he tells the Corinthians so in his first epistle to them. On the other hand, Huychius, patriarch of Jerusalem, A.D. 600, declared the outward visible signs of manly perfection to consist in an ample beard and in hair flowing down the shoulders.

In remote ages, the Persians, who now have their heads shaved, were hairy. Darius had a most luxuriant poll, and Alexander, who conquered him, probably paid few visits to the haircutter's in the course of his life. Alcibiades and his clique of roués introduced the effeminate fashion of long hair into Greece. Before their time the Athenians were *roundheads*, and it is fair to suppose that Aristides the Just, who did not pride himself above measure on his devotion to the Graces, sported a crop of bristles and ignored a comb. Herodotus relates that in token of mourning, the Persians were wont to cut off not only their own hair, but the manes of their horses. The same historian tells us that the Argians, being defeated by the Lacedæmonians, made a sacrifice of their locks, and vowed that they would remain shorn as long as they had not reconquered Thyraea. At Sparta, Lycurgus had decreed the wearing of long hair; but this law, to which Plutarch alludes, was never much obeyed. The Spartans when they attained their sixteenth year did as the young Athenians, and burned their hair upon the altar of either Diana or Mars. The fact is, all the

barbarians who used to come from across the seas in those times wore flowing locks, and the Greeks had no wish to resemble them.

Our primitive ancestors, the Britons, and like them the Gauls, allowed their hair to grow undisturbed. It often reached below the waist, and men like Caractacus must have looked curiosities. Conquered by the Romans, the Gauls and Britons were ignominiously clipped. In his enumeration of the Gallic tribes led into captivity by Cæsar, Lucian speaks of the Liguses "now shorn but crewhile possessed of an abundant mass of hair." Those of the Gauls who obtained their liberation hastened to let their hair grow again; in order the more to mark the importance they attached to flowing locks, they took to shaving their slaves. It is thus that Ausonius speaks of four young boys and four young girls, all shorn, as being a customary present to a rich Gaul on his wedding-day. At the beginning of the fifth century Pharamond established his kingdom in the province which thenceforth took the name of France. The Gauls were reduced to a state of bondage, and the conquerors laid ruthless scissors upon their victims' polls. From this time it became a generally understood thing all over Europe that long hair was the exclusive appanage of the great and noble. Not only serfs, but free peasants and burgesses, were forbidden to go about otherwise than cropped. The glebe slaves on a nobleman's estate were even (during the fifth, sixth, and seventh centuries) shorn altogether; and it is from this custom that the practice of saluting by taking off the hat arose. The act of uncovering the head amounted to saying: "See, sir; I am your servant; I have no hair."

When a nobleman was convicted of any felonious offence, the razor was invariably applied to his pate. Clotaire the First, King of France, caused his own son, Gondebaud, to be shorn for conspiring against him. And by way of adding to the disgrace of this sentence, he immediately afterwards issued an edict condemning to the severest penalties any one who should by stealth or violence cut off the hair of an honest man.

When the harsh ferocity of the early Gothic times had a little subsided, and when Christianity had introduced a few humane notions into the minds of men, certain plebeians began to murmur at the obligation of wearing bristles. At that period the large majority of priests and church dignitaries were sprung from the people; the scholars, masters of schools, and public professors, were also "churls" or "knaves"—as it was the polite fashion to call them; and as for the lawyers, clerks, petty magistrates, and government secretaries, there was not one of them but was of base blood. Still, these base-blooded people formed the most intelligent part of the nation, and it was humiliating to them to have no hair, while jolter-headed boobies in armour, who could neither read nor write, were wearing matted locks all down their backs. God save the mark! But why did not these reflecting "knaves" push their reasoning a little further? Why did they not raise a cry against all other privileges, and so nip many injustices,

which have grown up rank for centuries? But, we suppose, there is a time for everything. The hair question assumed disquieting proportions in France, for in the year 1201, Pierre Lombard, Archbishop of Paris (whose own head left much to be desired in the matter of capillary adornment) was prevailed upon by the malcontents to become their champion. He was a learned and a good man. No doubt he had often pondered in the silence of the closet upon the unseemly appearance of his close-clipped crown, and he took up the cudgels like a man determined to win. The King of France at that time was the gallant Philip the Second, generally known as Philip Augustus. He was not by any means a monarch averse to progress, for he had already excited no little dissatisfaction amongst his subjects by insisting that they should wash. He had erected extensive bath houses, and the people had been politely requested to make use of them as one of the best preservatives against scurvy and fever, which then had hold upon all the working classes. Philip Augustus, after giving the matter his most attentive consideration, signed the Magna Charta of capillary liberty, at about the time when his royal compeer, John of England, was pulling a dismal face over the Charter of Runnymede. Generally speaking the English follow the French in the matter of personal adornment, but in this case we had been beforehand with our neighbours. So early as the reign of Henry the Second, our plebeian forefathers had obtained exemption from the obligation of having their hair cut, and they had obtained it without much ado.

As was natural, the repeal of the long-hair law caused immense dissatisfaction among the nobles. The chief hardship, they alleged, was, that it would be thenceforth impossible to discern a gentleman from a boor at a hundred yards off; and they vented their spleen upon Pierre Lombard by prosecuting him before the ecclesiastical court of Paris for a work of his entitled *Les Sentences*, a theological treatise which his enemies affirmed to be heretical. The book was pronounced subversive, and was burned by the hands of the hangman. Pierre Lombard did not resign his see in consequence, but he died soon after, broken-hearted by persecution, and wishing, very likely, that he had allowed the hair of his countrymen to remain cut close in bristles, without interference.

We hear nothing more about short hair until the sixteenth century. From the time of Philip Augustus to that of Francis the First, every one, lord or bumpkin, let his hair fall down his back. Historians and chroniclers speak a great deal about the oils and ointments that were used by the wealthy and noble of the middle ages; and it appears to have been a pretty prevalent custom to powder one's locks with gold-dust.

Frequenter of picture-galleries must have observed that all portraits of French noblemen during the mediæval times, and up to the year 1530, represent men with abundant locks, but that from the year 1530 there is an abrupt

change: the hair of Frenchmen becoming, from that date, as short as that of a modern jail-bird. The reason of this is as follows: His Majesty Francis the First, happening to spend the Christmas of 1529 at Fontainebleau, organised a series of routs and revels, in honour of the new year. On the sixth of January, it used to be customary for the mummers to elect a king, and engage in a mimic war against a rival party, who would pretend to dethrone the mock monarch. Francis, hearing that the lord of a neighbouring castle had been elected "king" by some friends of his, disguised himself, and went with a party of twenty courtiers to offer battle to the revelers. The challenge was accepted. A fort was erected in the great hall of the castle, and Francis endeavoured to carry it by storm. It was usual to fight with eggs in guise of shot, and bags of flour in lieu of maces; but after a while the strife waxed hot, and somebody threw a lighted brand, which fell upon the disguised king's head and felled him senseless. The wound was a very serious one. For some time Francis remained in bed, and when he made his reappearance amidst his court, his hair was cropped quite close: while his beard, on the contrary, which he had always up to that time shaved off, had been suffered to grow luxuriantly. Imitation being the sincerest flattery, the courtiers hurried off to put themselves into the haircutter's hands. Gradually the people followed the example. Hair became short, and beards lengthened. From France, the fashion passed into England and other countries. It lasted for nearly a hundred years.

As every one knows, long hair and short hair had a marked political significance during the wars of Charles the First against his parliament. It was no joke, then, to be caught with bristles in Prince Rupert's camp; and to have come with curling locks under Cromwell's eye would have been to run the risk of being sent, not to the hair, but to the head, cutter's. Charles the Second brought back the fashion of long cavalier locks, but these were soon superseded by the towering wigs introduced by Louis the Fourteenth. He had a very poor head of hair; thin, lank, and of a dirty buff colour; and his barber devised a most voluminous peruke to meet the emergency. Of course the fashion "took," and this big unsightly headdress, which must have been insupportable in summer, remained in use until the middle of Louis the Fifteenth's reign, when it gave way to the famous powdered wig.

The great Republic swept away the wigs, and many of the heads that were in them. It was then that the pigtail fashion came in, both for high and low, and lasted long enough to be remembered by some men of the present day. Napoleon the First mercilessly cut off the pig-tails of his republican soldiers, and nearly caused a mutiny among the army of Egypt by so doing. Similarly, immense discontent was excited in the British Navy when the Admiralty abolished the pigtail some half century ago. So we come down to the present times, when we gratify our individual tastes in the matter of

our heads of hair and our beards, unless indeed we are private soldiers, or paupers, or convicts, or are put into a reformatory; when, for the general good, we must yield to sanitary cropping laws.

LITTLE WITCH AND THE MISERS.

IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER II.

ONE day Witch was busy making the soup for the dinner. She was covered to the chin in a large apron, and her sleeves were rolled up to her shoulders. She wielded a wooden spoon in stirring the pot, and chopped vegetables as she was accustomed; but the little maid was in an unusual state of anxiety. Her cheeks were hot, and her heart was thumping under her checked apron. The matter that troubled her was also unusual. Barry had invited her to breakfast with his mother. Witch was longing to go, but did not know how to ask permission to absent herself from home. In her distress she ventured to appeal to Kathleen, who came down to the kitchen with a tattered novel in her hand, to warm her feet, and to taste the soup.

Now Kathleen was not an ill-natured person. She knew that she was a large, selfish, useless young woman, and, in the abstract, she could have wished to be different. She secretly admired Witch's energy and industry, and often wished that there were servants to do the work of the house in her stead. Thinking thus she felt herself to be a most affectionate sister. She had once got up an hour earlier in the morning with the intention of helping Witch to arrange the breakfast-table, but, having so much unusual time on her hands, had been lured by her vanity into mazes of elaborate hair-dressing, from which she could not satisfactorily extricate herself till the breakfast was nearly over. This was now some months ago, and she had just been feeling that it was time to make another effort to assist Witch. So that Witch got a favourable hearing while Kathleen performed the duty of tasting the soup.

And Kathleen went to Barbara, the eldest sister, who had no taste for being a mother, and found her making paper flowers to wear in her bonnet, and laid little Witch's request before her.

"If they had even been rich and respectable people!" said Barbara. "But low acquaintances whom she has picked up by chance—for all the world like a servant maid!"

"Very like a servant maid," said Kathleen, *remorsefully*.

"Don't take me up in that manner," said Barbara. "I am your elder sister, and it is very disrespectful. Pray, who will make my toast? and you know that I cannot eat my breakfast without it."

"I will do it," said Kathleen, magnanimously; and, not to be outdone in generosity, Barbara consented to exist without Witch for a whole summer morning till ten o'clock.

The young poet and his mother lived in a strange old corner of Dublin called Weavers'-square. It is all paved with stones in the middle, quite shut in from the world, and the houses are queer and ancient, with their fronts rising up and narrowing to a peak, as if they had been originally intended for gables, and the builder had changed his mind. Up a winding stair went Witch, and into the presence of Barry's mother.

One of the small deep-set windows lay open, and a sweet-looking old woman sat beside it in a rude arm-chair. She was sorting a variety of coloured silks in her lap, though her eyes were closed, for she was blind. But she had learned to know the colours by her touch. A coarse brown pitcher, crammed full of blooming hawthorn, was on the sill beside her; and the scanty white curtain was drawn aside and the fresh air coming in.

Never before had Witch been in possession of three whole hours to be expended in idleness with her friends. As she took her seat at the frugal breakfast-table, she gazed in delight through her rose-coloured spectacles at the weaver's poverty-stricken home. The room had a dark sloping roof and crooked walls. The most important article of furniture was the heavy loom, at which Barry must work night and day. Upon it was stretched the unfinished cloth, and a little ledge held some paper, an ink-horn, and pen. Here were written the poems which were so beautiful to Witch, and which, later, the whole world was to extol. The sun was shining on Witch's brilliant kerchief, which she wore upon her shoulders in honour of the occasion. And the mother, who could not see, had been told of this, and of how bravely the colours sparkled, and of how fire flashed out of the gold.

"My dear," she said, "you would prize it indeed if you knew how my boy worked three nights without sleep to finish it. And it is a rare little garment with a wonderful story. Barry, have you told her the story?"

"No," said Barry; "not without your permission."

"We will tell her the first part," said the mother; "never mind the second; we need not spoil our morning."

"Well, my dear, the Sultan of the East had a beautiful Sultana, and the Sultana had a favourite bird, which was a paroquet. And the paroquet would perch on the shoulder of the Sultana, making so lovely a picture, that the Sultan's delight knew no bounds. The bird's brilliant plumage mingled with the lady's raven hair. The Sultan had the eye of a painter. This living picture caused him rapture.

"But the Sultana was haughty and wilful, and she did not choose to be kept sitting with a bird on her shoulder. Her love for the creature changed to hate. She secretly gave it poison, and it died.

"The Sultan was so afflicted at the death of the poor bird, that his temper became intolerable, and the Sultana had good cause to repent her cruel deed. She bethought her of how she might repair the loss. She employed a skilful artist to design for her a kerchief, from which should shine forth all the colours of the plumage of the bird; these to be enhanced by a mixture of gold and silver, and jewels to be sewn upon the fringe. She wore the kerchief. The Sultan was enchanted by her sympathy and affection, and his temper became at once less unbearable. The harmony and brilliance of the colours in the web were more splendid than the presence of the bird. The Sultana was charmed with her success, and henceforth never appeared before the Sultan without taking care to have the kerchief on her shoulders.

"Things went on very well for a time after this, till one of the Sultana's women began to covet the curious garment of which her mistress was so fond. Her desire became strong, and the kerchief disappeared.

"Then there arose a storm in the palace. The Sultana flew to the Sultan. The Sultan pronounced sentence of death on that person with whom the kerchief should be found. A search commenced, and the terrified thief flew from hiding-place to hiding-place with her prize. A traveller with sacks upon a mule came tramping past the gates of the palace. The woman ran to meet him, and thrust the dangerous kerchief into one of his sacks. The man thought her mad, and passed on, congratulating himself upon his luck. 'I shall sell it,' he thought, 'for a good price.' But a gossip on the road soon enlightened him as to the story of the kerchief. 'I shall be caught,' he now said, 'and put to death as

the thief!' Arrived at the nearest town, he rushed into the first door he saw open. A young girl was coming out. The traveller threw the kerchief over her face, and ran away. When the girl drew the kerchief from her eyes, he had disappeared.

"Now this young girl had not yet heard the story of the kerchief, and was delighted with the present which the strange man had brought her. She put the kerchief on her head, and looked out of the window. Very soon there arose a tumult in the street. Here, then, was the thief, and she was doomed. It was useless for her to tell how she came by the kerchief. She had been seen with the Sultana's precious garment on her head, and she must die.

"She had friends, however, and in terror and with difficulty she escaped out of the country. In the course of a few years she made her way to France. She was an intelligent young woman, and comely, though copper-coloured, and with a ring in her nose. That ring used to awe me very much; for she was my nurse. My mother happened to meet with her while travelling through France, and engaged her as an attendant on her children. Her strange story was a delight to my childhood. A sight of the Sultana's kerchief was her reward for my good conduct. She loved me very dearly, as I loved her. The kerchief was her one curiosity and treasure, and she gave it to me when I—— parted from my family," said the mother, sadly. "She gave it with her blessing, and foretold that it would bring me good fortune. I could not part with it, my dear, even after all these years. But Barry has copied it for you. And I know by the touch that he has copied it right well."

When Witch went home that day, stepping on tiptoe with happiness, she perceived that all the dingy shutters were shut in the next house; which gave her a great shock. She had been humming a song of Barry's, to which she had set a little tune of her own; but she stopped short and her voice was heard no more. "This must be death," thought little Witch. "Nothing else can it be!"

"I am sure I don't wonder at it," said Barbara. "I expected that some of them must have been starved long ago."

Alice now remembered that she had heard a great noise going on next door during the night, and Kathleen secretly determined to have a little private conversation with the charwoman. This she ingeniously arranged, and the truth was ascertained. The Brother Scarecrow was

dead. He had been found dead in that corner of the garden where he was accustomed to stare into the mould. He had been carried into the house by the two poor old sisters, where he now lay waiting for the undertaker.

"How terribly lonely and wretched they must be," thought little Witch, with a sigh from the very bottom of her pitiful heart. And then the strangest idea came into her mind, and she shivered and crept a little nearer to the fire. But the idea remained, and its presence in her mind made her start whenever Barbara looked at her. It would not go away, and when the sisters were all in bed, and she had slacked the kitchen fire, she sat down upon the stairs with her candle in her hand, and thought about the two miserable old women sitting lonely with their dead. And the fantastic picture which had been hovering before her eyes all the evening was there now more plainly than ever. It was a picture of herself, Witch, knocking at the hall door of the next house, walking down an unknown hall and up a strange staircase, and sitting in a dreary death-room between those frightful old ladies. It was a horrible picture, Witch thought, yet fascinating, for her heart was bleeding for the sufferers.

At last she went to bed, but it was useless her trying to sleep, and after half an hour she got up. "What on earth will Barbara say?" she said, shivering as she dressed herself. She wrapped her cloak around her, and took the latch key. Very soon she had closed her own door softly, and was standing trembling before the next. "Dump! dump!" said the muffled knocker; but Witch's heart seemed to make more noise.

It seemed almost a year before there was any response to that timid appeal of Witch. At last a dismal ray appeared glimmering down the darkness of the staircase. A chain and many bolts were withdrawn, and Witch stood face to face with Miss Tabitha.

"From the undertakers?" asked Miss Tabitha, scowling forth.

"No," said little Witch, timidly.

"Who then?" said Miss Tabitha, a note of alarm in her gruff voice.

"I am only the little girl from next door," said Witch; "and please, madam, I thought you might like some one to be useful, to sit up at night, or to make a cup of tea, or—anything like that—" stammered trembling Witch.

"No!" shrieked Miss Tabitha, growing larger and more dreadful with horror, "nothing like that do we want. Nothing

in the least like that. Go off—at once—or I shall call the police!" Her eyes glared, she extended her arms before the door to keep Witch out. Suddenly she slammed the door in her face, and refastened all the chains and bars.

"What has happened?" asked Miss Seraphina, coming down-stairs with red rings round her withered eyes.

"Thieves!" groaned Miss Tabitha, who was rolling herself against the wall in a convulsion of fear.

"What?" shrieked Seraphina, "a gang of robbers?"

"Worse!" said Tabitha. "We shall be torn to pieces. They will leave us without a farthing to bury us!"

"Will they beat in the door?" said Seraphina, shuddering.

"She might do anything after daring to knock and ask for admittance," growled Tabitha; "but she will be more likely to take cunning means, steal over the garden wall, or come down the chimney."

"She!—who?" asked Miss Seraphina.

"Who! why the girl from the next house," barked Tabitha.

"The little girl with the kerchief!" murmured Miss Seraphina, and a dazzling, dancing, beautiful vision came suddenly hovering before her aching, half-blind eyes.

"Coming to make tea for us!" groaned Tabitha. "Who told her that we could afford to drink tea? She will break in yet, and eat us out of house and home. Poor old creatures who live in daily danger of starvation! And we shall be left without a farthing. I will go and I will watch; I will not leave the spot. There, you guard the hall door while I watch in the garden. They shall not make us paupers. They shall not—"

She had now groped her way to the back door. She was outside among the dank weeds and grass in the garden. The moon had risen, warm, and yellow, and round, above some ragged gables, and a lank, evil-looking tree, was slowly waving a stealthy arm. Here was a dark creeping body moving upon the wall against the sky. This must certainly be a robber climbing the wall. Miss Tabitha threw up her arms, tottered, gasped, and dropped down in a fit.

But little Witch had crept back to her bed, and, having done what she could, was now fast asleep.

When the undertaker arrived at the misers' dwelling he was asked to provide two coffins. Forlorn Miss Seraphina sat by her dead, the last of three who had clung together here for forty years in

hunger and madness; keeping guard over the secret which was buried in their garden.

"Oh, that any one would stay with me!" said the lonely old woman. "I shall die of fear and grief!" And she besought the charwoman who had been helping her not to leave the house. But the charwoman was obliged to go.

So Seraphina was left alone. The closed shutters and the fastened doors shut her out from the summer world, even such as it was in the street. That clump of trees against the distant horizon was as far from her vision as if it had been ten thousand miles away. The sun streamed in through the cracks of the dilapidated shutters, and ventured a little way along the floor to smile at that miserable living creature, so old and so ugly and so utterly forlorn, who sat watching beside two coffins. And it was worse when evening came, and the children of the neighbourhood, who had been at school all day, came out to romp and sing under the window; but worse still when supper time had called them home, and the street was deserted, and the night was growing darker and more silent every moment.

"I shall go quite mad!" said Seraphina, striking her poor breast in despair.

"Oh, little girl!—little girl next door!" moaned she. "Would that you would come knocking to this house again!"

Just then little Witch was getting her house put in order for the night, and her sisters put to bed. Whether some echo of that cry reached her through the wall, I will not say; but certain it is that no sooner was she alone in her own room than she began to pray for the one solitary old woman now alone in the neighbouring house, and to think of her even more pitifully than she had thought when there had been two. It appeared that there was a fascination about those poor old ugly neighbours, living and dead; for Witch could not settle to take her rest.

"Little girl! little girl!" moaned Seraphina at the other side of the wall.

"Oh, poor old woman!" sighed Witch, who, nevertheless, of course, could not hear her. And at last little Witch, being very tired, fell asleep, and desolate Seraphina sat alone through the long night, almost crazed with fear and despair.

When Witch went out to the garden next morning, she saw Seraphina's poor gnome-like face looking wistfully down on her from the lobby window.

"It is awful to think of anything human

being so ugly," thought Witch; but still she went on pitying the poor neighbour.

Looking up again she imagined that the old woman stretched her arms towards her; and this remained upon her mind.

"That is not the one who turned me back," thought Witch; and then she went indoors, trembling. It was as if she had seen a goblin looking out of a haunted house.

At last the dreary night came round again, and Seraphina tottered about her miserable home, in and out of the blank empty rooms, and back again to the death-chamber. The companionship of that dead brother and sister was too dreadful. Having feared them in life she feared them more in death, and the rooms in which they were not seemed more terrible than the rooms in which they were. Presently, sitting in all her woe, Seraphina heard a gentle little knock come on the street door of her house.

Seraphina raised her head and listened.

Could it be a robber? Or could it be the little girl come in answer to her call?

The knock was repeated, and Seraphina took her rushlight in hand, and stumbled down the dark staircase to the hall.

"Who is it?" she called through the keyhole.

"I live next door, and my name is little Witch," was the answer. Whereupon Seraphina at once set down her rushlight, and withdrew the chain from the door.

"Come in, come in!" she said, holding her shaking hands towards the visitor, while tears and a human light came into her poor dreary eyes.

"I thought you might be lonely," said Witch, apologetically, "and that you might let me stay with you till morning."

"My dear, my dear!" cried the old woman, "how will you bear this dreadful house?" And then getting quite sick with joy at hearing so pleasant a young voice in her ears, she fainted in the hall at Witch's feet.

Witch was terrified, thinking she was dead. "I have killed her," she said to herself. But, after great efforts, she succeeded in restoring poor Seraphina's senses, and assisted her to an old settee in the dingy parlour, where she covered her with her own little cloak. Then she set about making a fire in the rusty parlour grate, where a fire had not been kindled for half a century. She stole back to her own house, and out of her scanty stores brought some tea, besides other matters not to be found

in the misers' household. And when Seraphina saw the bountiful little spirit making itself so busy for her comfort, she wept enough of tears to wash all the dryness out of her withered life. And when a savoury meal was set before her she ate it with great appetite, moaning all the time, and wondering that a judgment did not descend upon her greediness.

Witch remained all night, bearing the poor neighbour company, and early in the morning returned to her home and her household work. A scanty procession carried the two dead misers to the grave. And after this was over, and the evening had come round again, Witch went boldly up to Barbara, saying she wished to spend an hour with the lonely lady next door.

"You are a strange creature!" said Barbara; but she did not prevent her going. So Witch went and came, and Seraphina grew more human every day.

"My dear," she said once, "I am afraid of this house except when you are in it. But I dare not leave it, because of something that is in the garden. It is a curse which is upon me, and which I am obliged to bear." And then she drooped her poor face and groaned.

At other times she cried aloud, "Oh, I have such a secret, such a terrible secret! How could they go and leave me with it!"

And more than once Witch got a fit of frightened wonder about the secret. Could it be that a creature had been murdered, and was buried in the garden? But this idea was too dreadful to be harboured.

One bright autumn evening there came a whim into Witch's head, a whim for the amusement of Seraphina. She had just finished a very radiant little picture, and she had got some brilliant wild flowers which Barry had plucked for her in the wood that morning. She made a little nosegay, and she took the picture under her arm, and put the paroquet kerchief in her pocket. Here were three treasures which she had brought for Seraphina's amusement. She first presented her flowers to the delighted old woman, who snuffed them eagerly, holding them off, holding them near, and trembling all the time.

"Time was when I gathered flowers," quavered she.

Then Witch exhibited her picture. It was a group of young girls sitting on a mossy wall, with an orchard in full bloom behind them. At this sight the old woman most strangely began to weep.

"It is my old home," she said; "my

home of long ago. And there am I, and there are my sisters. Ah, before the money arrived from India. There is Margaret's fair face, as I live; and, my dear, Tabitha and I were not then so ugly as we afterwards became. There was a little green lane at the other side of that wall, and people used to go up and down on summer evenings. My child, you have brought me a picture of my youth, and it is only cruelty now."

Little Witch stood aghast. She had composed this picture from a tender description given by Barry's mother of the home of her childhood. And wonderingly she remembered that Margaret was that poor mother's name. She had painted that sweet face pointed out by Seraphina from her fancy of what that blind mother must have been in her youth. Now here was a curious coincidence. And it seemed that she had brought trouble instead of pleasure. But she remembered the kerchief, and triumphantly pulled it from her pocket.

"See," she said, flinging it over her shoulders; "does it not shine splendidly? Ah, if you could but see it in the sun!"

Seraphina screamed, and laid hold of Witch's skirts.

"Then I was not deceived when I saw you with it before from the window," she said. "Oh, it is the paroquet, the paroquet!" feeling it all over. "Girl, where did you get this thing?"

"I got it from Barry," said Witch, now truly in dismay.

"Who is Barry?" gasped Seraphina.

"His mother and he are my dearest friends," said Witch. "He wove this for me on his loom."

"No; he must have stolen it!" said Seraphina, in great excitement. "There was only one kerchief like this in the world. With a wonderful story. Oh, such a wonderful story!"

"I know the story," said Witch, nodding.

"You know the story?" shrieked Seraphina.

"Yes," said Witch, "about the bird and the Sultana. But this is not that one. This is copied from it. Barry's mother has the original and would not part with it for the world."

"Where did she get it?" moaned Seraphina. "Oh, where did she get it? The bird and the Sultana. Yes, that was part of the story. But the rest of it, do you know the rest of it?"

"No," said Witch; but she remembered that there had been a sequel to the blind mother's story.

"Then I will tell it to you," said Seraphina. "The kerchief was stolen, and handed from one to another till it came into the possession of a nurse in our family."

"In *your* family?" interrupted Witch.

"Yes," said Seraphina; "we had servants enough, and pleasures and comforts. We were not wretched creatures then. We lived in a beautiful country. Your picture is a morsel of our home. We were as happy as young creatures could be. The only vexation we had as children was the quarrelling of Tabitha and Roger about which would save up the most cherry-stones or halfpence in a drawer. Our nurse often scolded them for that, and told of how there had been misers in our family once; and bade them take care lest an evil spirit should get into them. Our mother was dead, and she was a mother to little Margaret, who was by many years the youngest of us all. She loved little Margaret as well as her own life."

"At last there came a great fortune from India, and Tabitha and Roger became miserable. After this they could not endure the spending of a halfpenny. Little Margaret was just then grown up, and as sweet, oh as sweet as the face in your picture. Home became terrible by-and-by, and poor Margaret ran away from it and made a sad marriage. She came back once begging a little help for her sick husband and children. But they would not give her a penny. Our old nurse was dying at that time, but she got up on her feet to curse Tabitha and Roger. She was folding and pinning the paroquet kerchief—the only gift she had to give—upon Margaret's bosom with her dying hands at the same time that she was uttering her curse. It withered me up for evermore, that curse did. And it seemed to pass into the colours of that paroquet kerchief, and they seemed to burn and burn with it. That is why it is so dreadful to me now. I heard that Margaret and her husband and children all died. I never could go to seek them, for I never had any money. And oh, what a life I have had, all along!" moaned Seraphina, "till it has ended like this, through the money and the curse!"

"I tell you what it is, Miss Seraphina," said Witch, promptly. "My friend Barry is your nephew, and his mother is your sister Margaret!"

"You would not make a fool of a poor, old, lonely wretch?" said Seraphina, with a wistful look in Witch's face.

"Come and see," said Witch.

"Stay," said Seraphina; "are they poor? I hope they are poor, for there is such a heap of money in the garden!"

A bright light dawned before Witch. Barry's good fortune shone out upon her. And she and Seraphina made their way to Weavers'-square.

"Sister Margaret! Sister Margaret!" cried Seraphina, "will you come and take the curse off that Indian money? It is all buried in the earth for your son. Let him go and dig it up!"

Some time afterwards, a busy, active old lady might have been seen stepping briskly about a handsome country house. There were the gardens to be put in order, and Margaret's pretty rooms to be furnished. Seraphina arranged it all, for the young people were away on their wedding tour. The sweep and the milkman out of a certain dreary street could hardly have recognised this old lady, if they had seen her.

The world has got Barry's name on the tip of its busy tongue. Little Witch is a great lady, and paints pictures of foreign lands. She does not forget her kitchen, nor her paroquet kerchief. How do they get on at home? she will often wonder.

Oh dear! oh dear! Kathleen has to make the tea, I am afraid. Alice has to mend the broken stockings. Bella has to dust the little tambourine-girl on the chimney-piece! True, there is now a servant, with arms much stronger than Witch's ever were. But yet there is such a great deal to be done, after all. Why did little Witch go away?

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BOOK III.

CHAPTER X. LADY CAROLINE ADVISES ON A DELICATE SUBJECT.

THE communication which Mr. Benthall, in his bluff off-hand manner, had made to Walter Joyce, had surprised the latter very much, and embarrassed him not a little. Ever since the receipt of Marian Ashurst's letter announcing her intention of marrying Mr. Creswell, Joyce had lived absolutely free from any influence of "the cruel madness of love, the poison of honey flowers, and all the measureless ill." All his thoughts had been given up to labour and ambition, and, with the exception of his deep-rooted and genuine regard for Lady Caroline, and his friendly liking for the Creswell girls, he entertained no feeling for any woman living, unless a suspicion of and an aversion to Marian Creswell might be so taken into account. Had he this special partiality for Maud Creswell, of which Benthall had spoken so plainly? He set to work to catechise himself, to look back through the events of the past few months, noting what he remembered of their relations to each other.

Yes, he had seen a great deal of Maud; he remembered very frequent occasions on which they had been thrown together. He had not noticed it at the time; it seemed to come naturally enough. Gertrude, of course, was engaged with Benthall when he was in town, in writing to him or thinking of him when he was away, and Lady Caroline had to go through all the hard work which falls upon a great lady in society, work the amount of which can only be appreciated by those who have per-

formed it or seen it performed. So that, as Joyce then recollected, he and Maud had been thrown a great deal together, and, as he further recollected, they had had a great many discussions on topics very far removed from the mere ordinary frivolity of society-talk; and he had noticed that she seemed to have clear ideas, which she understood how to express. What an odd thing, that what Benthall said had never struck him before! It must have been patent to other people, though; and that put the matter, unpleasantly, in rather a ridiculous light. After all, though, what was there ridiculous in it? Maud was a very handsome girl, a clever girl, and an unmistakable lady. What a pretty, slight, girlish figure she had! such a graceful outline! her head was so well posed upon her neck! And Joyce smiled as he found himself drawing lines in the air with the paper-knife which he was idly tossing in his hand.

And he had Benthall's assurance that the girl cared for him; that was something. Benthall was a man careful in the extreme as to what he said, and he would not have made such a statement where a girl was concerned, and that girl his own sister-in-law, unless he were tolerably certain of being right. His own sister-in-law; he had it then, of course, from Gertrude, who was Maud's second self, and would know all about it. It was satisfactory to know that there was a woman in the world who cared for him, and though without the smallest particle of vanity he accepted the belief very readily, for his rejection by Marian Ashurst and the indignity which he had suffered at her hands had by no means rendered him generally cynical or suspicious of the sex. Marian Ashurst! what an age ago it seemed since the days

when the mention of that name would have sent the blood flowing to his cheek, and his heart thumping audibly, and now here he was staying in the old house where all the love scenes had taken place, walking round the garden where all the soft words had been spoken, all the vows made which she had thrown to the winds, when the last parting, with what he then, and for so long afterwards, thought its never-to-be-forgotten agony had occurred, and he had not felt one single extra palpitation. Mrs. Creswell was staying away from Woolgreaves just then, at some inland watering-place; for the benefit of her health, which it was said had suffered somewhat from her constant attendance on her husband, or Joyce might have met her. Such a meeting would not have caused him an emotion. When he had encountered her in the lane, during the canvassing time, there was yet lingering within his breast a remembrance of the great wrong she had done him, and that was fanned into additional fury by the nature of her request and the insolence with which she made it. But all those feelings had died out now, and were he then, he thought, to come across Marian Creswell's path, she would be to him as the meekest stranger, and no more.

If he were to marry, he knew of no one more likely to suit him in all ways than Maud. Pretty to look at, clever to talk to, sufficiently accustomed to him and his ways of life, she would make him a far better wife than nine-tenths of the young ladies he was accustomed to meet in such little society as he could spare the time to cultivate. Why should he marry at all? He answered the question almost as soon as he asked it. His life wanted brightening, wanted refining, was at present too narrow and confined; all his hopes, thoughts, and aspirations were centred on himself. He was all wrong. There should be some one who—the chambers were confoundedly dreary too, when he came home to them from the office or the House; he should travel when the House rose, somewhere abroad, he thought, and it would be dull work moving about by himself, and—

What pretty, earnest eyes Maud had, and shining hair, and delicate "bred" looking hands! She certainly was wonderfully nice, and if, as Benthall avowed, she really cared for him, he—who was this coming to break in on his pleasant day-dream? Oh, Gertrude.

"I was wondering where you were, Mr. Joyce! You said you wanted your

holiday, and you seem to be passing it in slumber!"

"Nothing so commonplace, Mrs. Benthall—"

"One moment, why do you call me Mrs. Benthall? What has made you so formal and ridiculous all of a sudden? You used to call me Gertrude, in London?"

"Yes, but then you were an unmarried girl, now you are a wedded woman, and there's a certain amount of respect due to matronhood."

"What nonsense! Do call me Gertrude again, please, Mrs. Benthall sounds so horrid! I should like the boarders here in the house to call me Gertrude, only George says it wouldn't be proper! And so you weren't asleep?"

"Not the least bit! Although I'm ready to allow I was dreaming."

"Dreaming! what about?"

"About the old days which I spent in this place—and their association!"

"Oh yes, I know—I mean to say—"

"No, no, Gertrude, say what you had on your lips then! No prevarication and no hesitation; what was it?"

"No, really, nothing—it is only—"

"I insist!"

"Well, what I mean to say is, of course people will talk in a village, you know, and we've heard about your engagement, you know, and how it was broken off, and how badly you were treated, and— Oh, how silly I was to say a word about it! I'm sure George would be horribly cross if he knew!"

"And did you imagine I was grinning over my past, cursing the day when I first saw the faithless fair, and indulging in other poetic rhapsodies! My dear Gertrude, it's not a pleasant thing being jilted, but one lives to get over it and forget all about it; even to forgive her whom I believe it is correct to call the false one!"

"Yes, I dare say! In fact George and Maud both said you didn't think anything about it now, and—"

"Maud! did she know of it too?"

"Oh yes, we all knew of it! The old woman who had been housekeeper, or cook, or something here in the old Ashurst's time told George, and—"

"What did Maud say about it?" interrupted Joyce.

"She said—I forget what! No! I recollect! she said that—that Mrs. Creswell was just the sort of woman that would fail to appreciate you!"

"That may be taken in two senses, as

a compliment or otherwise," said Joyce, laughing.

"I'm sure Maud meant it nicely," said Gertrude, earnestly. Then added, "By the way, I wanted to talk to you about Maud, Mr. Joyce."

"About Maud!" said Walter. Then thought to himself, "Is it possible that the seeds of match-making are already developing themselves in this three months' old matron?"

"Yes. I don't think George mentioned it to you, but he had a talk with Maud, just before our marriage, about her future. George, of course, told her that our house would be her home, her permanent home I mean; and he gave her the kindest message from Lady Caroline, who bargained that at least a portion of the year should be spent with her."

"What did your sister say to that?"

"Well, she was much obliged and all that, but she did not seem inclined to settle down. She has some horrible notions about duty and that sort of thing, and thinks her money has been given to her to do good with; and George is afraid she would get, what he calls, 'let in' by some of those dreadful hypocritical people, and we want you to talk to her and reason her out of it."

"I? Why I, my dear Gertrude?"

"Because she believes in you so much more than in anybody else, and is so much more likely to do what you advise her."

"She pays me a great compliment," said Joyce, rising, "and I'll see what's to be done. The first thing, I think, is to consult Lady Caroline, who would be sure to give good advice. I shall see her to-morrow, and I'll——"

"See Lady Caroline to-morrow! I thought you were not going back till Saturday?"

"I've just thought of some special business about which I must see Lady Caroline at once, and I'll mention this at the same time. Now, let us find George. Come for a turn."

They found George and went for their turn, and when their turn was over, and Gertrude was alone with her husband, she told him the conversation which she had had with Walter Joyce. The schoolmaster laughed heartily.

"Pon my word, Gerty," he said, "match-making appears to be your forte, born and bred in you! I never believed in the reality of those old dowagers in Mrs. Trollope's novels, until I saw you."

"Well, I declare, George, you are complimentary! old dowagers, indeed! But, seriously, I wish Walter wasn't going to Lady Caroline!"

"Why, what on earth has that to do with it?"

"Well, I mean speaking in Maud's interest!"

"Why, one would think that Lady Caroline was in love with Walter Joyce herself!"

"Exactly!"

"Why—why—you don't think so, my dear?"

"I'm sure so, my dear!"

And, as response, the Reverend George Benthall whistled in a loud and unclerical manner.

When Walter Joyce arrived in Chesterfield-street, he found Lady Caroline was absent, passing the holidays with Lord and Lady Hetherington at Westhope, and, after a little hesitation, he determined to go down there and see her. He had not seen anything of the Hetheringtons since his election: his lordship was occupied with some new fad which kept him in the country, and her ladyship did not care to come to town until after Easter. Lord Hetherington had viewed the progress of his ex-secretary with great satisfaction. His recollections of Joyce were all pleasant; the young man had done his work carefully and cleverly, had always been gentlemanly and unobtrusive, and had behaved deuced well—point of fact, deuced well, brave, and all that kind of thing, in that matter of saving Car'line on the ice. Her ladyship's feelings were very different. She disliked self-made people more than any others, and those who were reckoned clever were specially obnoxious to her. She had heard much, a great deal too much, of Joyce from Mr. Gould, who, in his occasional visits, delighted in dilating on his recent focman's abilities, eloquence, and pluck, partly because he respected such qualities wherever he met with them, but principally because he knew that such comments were very aggravating to Lady Hetherington (no great favourite of his); and she was not more favourably disposed towards him, because he had adopted political principles diametrically opposed to those in which she believed. But what actuated her most in her ill-feeling towards Mr. Joyce was a fear that, now that he had obtained a certain position, he might aspire to Lady Caroline Mansergh, who, as Lady

Hetherington always suspected, would be by no means indisposed to accept him. Hitherto the difference in their social status had rendered any such proceeding thoroughly unlikely; a tutor, or a, what did they call it?—reporter to a newspaper, could scarcely have the impertinence to propose for an earl's sister; but, as a member of parliament, the man enjoyed a position in society, and nothing could be said against him on that score. There was Lady Violet Magnier, Lord Haughton-forest's daughter. Well, Mr. Magnier sold ribbons, and pocket-handkerchiefs, and things, in the City; but then he was member for some place, and was very rich, and it was looked upon as a very good match for Lady Violet. Mr. Joyce was just the man to assert himself in a highly disagreeable manner; he always held views about the supremacy of intellect, and that kind of rubbish; and the more he kept away from them the less chance he would have of exercising any influence over Lady Caroline Mansergh.

It may be imagined, then, that her ladyship was not best pleased when her sister-in-law informed her that she had had a telegram from Walter Joyce, asking whether he might come down to Westhope to see her on special business, and that she "supposed Margaret had no objection." Margaret had strong objections, but did not think it politic to say so just then, so merely intimated that she would be happy to see Mr. Joyce whenever he chose to come. The tone in which this intimation was conveyed was so little pleasing to Lady Caroline that she took care to impress on her sister-in-law the fact that Joyce's visit was to her, Lady Caroline, and that she had merely mentioned his coming as a matter of politeness to her hostess, which did not tend to increase Lady Hetherington's regard for Walter Joyce.

But the bienséances were never neglected on account of any personal feeling, and when Joyce arrived at the station he recognised the familiar livery on the platform, and found a carriage in waiting to convey him to Westhope. During the drive he occupied himself in thinking over the wondrous changes which had taken place since his first visit to that neighbourhood, when, with a wardrobe provided by old Jack Byrne, and a scanty purse supplied from the same source, he had come down in a dependant position, not knowing any of those amongst whom his lot in life was to be passed, and without the least idea as to

the kind of treatment he might expect at their hands. That treatment, he knew, would have been very different had it not been for Lady Caroline Mansergh. But for her counsel, too, he would have suffered himself to have remained completely crushed and vanquished by Marian Ashurst's conduct, would have subsided into a mere drudge without energy or hope. Yes, all the good in his life he owed to the friendship, to the kindly promptings of that sweetest and best of women. He felt that thoroughly, and yet it never struck him that in asking her to advise him as to his marriage with some one else, he was committing, to say the least of it, a solecism. The axiom which declares that the cleverest men have the smallest amount of common sense, has a broader foundation than is generally believed.

On his arrival at Westhope, Joyce was informed by the butler that Lord Hetherington had gone round the Home Farm with the bailiff, and that her ladyship was out driving, but that they would both be home to luncheon, when they expected the pleasure of his company; meanwhile would he walk into the library, where Lady Caroline Mansergh would join him? He went into the library, and had just looked round the room and viewed his old associations, glanced at the desk where he had sat working away for so many hours at a stretch, at the big tomes whence he had extracted the subject-matter for that great historical work, still, alas! incomplete, at the line of Shakespearean volumes which formed Lady Caroline Mansergh's private reading, when the door opened, and Lady Caroline came in. Country air had not had its usual beneficial effect, Joyce thought as he looked at her; for her face was very pale, and her manner nervous and odd. Yet she shook him warmly by the hand, and bade him be seated in her old cheery tone.

"It is very good of you to let me come down here, breaking in upon the rest which I have no doubt you want, and boring you with my own private affairs," said Joyce, seating himself in the window-sill close by the arm-chair which Lady Caroline had taken.

"It is not very good of you to talk conventionalities, and to pretend that you don't know I have a deep interest in all that concerns you," replied Lady Caroline.

"I have every reason to know it, and my last words were merely a foolish utterance of society-talk——"

"Which you always declare you despise, and which you know I detest."

"Quite true; think it unspoken and absolute me."

"I do; but if we are to have what you used to call a 'business talk,' we must have it at once. In half an hour Lord and Lady Hetherington and the luncheon will arrive simultaneously, and our chance is at an end. And you did not come from London, I suppose, to discuss tenant right, or to listen to Lady Hetherington's diatribes against servants?"

"No, indeed; with all deference to them, I came to see you, and you alone, to ask your advice, and to take it, which is quite a different thing, as I have done before in momentous periods of my life."

"And this is a momentous period?"

"Undoubtedly, as much, if not more so, than any."

Had she any notion of what was coming? Her pale face grew paler; she pushed back her chesnut hair, and her large eyes were fixed on him in grave attention.

"You alone of any one in the world, man or woman, know the exact story of my first love. You knew my confidence and trust, you knew how they were abused. You saw how I suffered at the time, and you cannot be ignorant of what is absolute fact; that to your advice and encouragement I owe not merely recovery from that wretched state, but the position to which I have since attained!"

"Well?"

"That first love fell dead; you know when! Ambition, the passion that supplied its place, was sufficient for a time to absorb all my thoughts, hopes, and energies. But, to a certain extent it has been gratified, and it suffices me no longer. My heart wants some one to love, and turns to one to whom it owes gratitude, but whom it would sooner meet with a warmer feeling. Are you not well, Lady Caroline?"

"Quite well, thanks, and—and interested. Pray go on!"

"To go on is difficult. It is so horrible in a man to have to say that he sees he has awakened interest in a woman, that she shows all unknowingly to herself, but still sufficiently palpable, that he is the one person in the world to her, that she rejoices in his presence, and grieves at his absence; worst of all that all this is pointed out to him by other people——"

Lady Caroline's cheeks flushed as she echoed the words, "Pointed out to him by other people!"

"Exactly. That's the worst of it. However, all this being so, and my feelings such as I have described, I presume I shouldn't be repeating my former error, inviting a repetition of my previous fate, in asking her to be my wife?"

"I—I should think not." The flush still in her cheeks. "Do I know the lady?"

"Do you know her? No one knows her so well! Ah, Lady Caroline, kindest and dearest of friends, why should I keep you longer in suspense? It is Maud Creswell!"

Her face blanched in an instant. Her grasp tightened rigidly over the arm of the chair on which it lay, but she gave no other sign of emotion. Even her voice, though hollow and metallic, never shook as she repeated the name, "Maud Creswell!"

"Yes. Maud Creswell! You are surprised, I see, but I don't think you will blame me for my choice! She is eminently ladylike, and clever, and nice, and——"

"I don't think you could possibly—— what is it, Thomas?"

"Luncheon, my lady."

"Very well. I must get you to go in to luncheon without me, Mr. Joyce; you will find Lord and Lady Hetherington in the dining-room, and I will come down directly. We will resume our talk afterwards."

And she left the room, and walked swiftly and not too steadily up the hall towards the staircase.

A NEW RELIGION.

A NEW religion has within the last few years been founded in Persia, which seems destined to exercise a powerful antagonism to Mohammedanism. Amongst the doctrines of the Bábys, as these new sectaries are called, none are more likely to attract attention than those which are intended to effect a radical change in the condition of women in the East. Bábysm was founded in 1843 at Shiraz by Mirza-Ali-Mohammed, a young man of nineteen years of age, who gave out that he was the genuine successor of Ali, the true prophet of Iran. He was endowed with singular beauty of form and features; with an eloquence which seemed inspired; and with great earnestness of purpose. The example of Mohammed induced him to prepare himself for his mission by an assiduous study of the ancient systems of religion, and he listened also to the teachings of Protestant missionaries, of orthodox Jews, and of followers of the Kabbala. He made the pilgrimage to Mecca, and visited the tomb of the prophet; yet in the very midst of the holy city his faith

first wavered, and after a visit to the ruins of the mosque at Kufa, where Ali, his ancestor, had been murdered, he returned to Shiraz, determined to wage open war against the national religion. Many of his fellow-travellers had been so charmed by his eloquence and agreeable manners, that they had followed him to Shiraz, and when he began to explain the Koran in a totally new fashion, they eagerly adopted his interpretation. Mirza-Ali-Mohammed commenced by inveighing against the vices of the Mullahs, and he showed that their actions, their habits, and their doctrines were totally at variance with the commands of the holy book. He preached daily against them in the mosques, and daily gathered round him a larger following of disciples. The Mullahs attempted to refute his assertions in public discussions, but they were worsted in argument, and Mirza's fame was enhanced by his triumph. Had he been satisfied with the part of a reformer only, he would have been safe in the strength of his popularity; but he chose to found a new religion on the ruins of the one he condemned, and thus eventually led his followers into a fatal struggle with the government.

He announced to his disciples that he was the Báb, that is to say, the gate, the mystic gate, by which alone one could enter into the true faith, and acquire a knowledge of God; and from this name his followers have received their appellation of Bábys. Soon afterwards he ventured to assume a still higher rank, and revealed to his numerous disciples that he was not only the gate which led to the knowledge of the Creator, but to a certain degree the very object of that knowledge, that is to say, a divine emanation. He declared that not only was he a prophet, and the greatest of prophets, but that he was prophecy itself: the truth, the Spirit of God in a human form. Thus he returned to the old idea of emanation, and following the theology of the Kabbalists, he taught that the creative power was exercised by seven attributes or emanations of the Deity. To speak without figures, the Creator divides himself, so to say, in order to manifest himself in creation. In the Book of Precepts, translated by M. de Gobineau, are to be found these words attributed to the Creator, which express this idea still more forcibly, "In truth, O my Creation, thou art myself!" In the same work may be read the creed of the new religion: "We have all begun in God, and we shall all return into God, and we draw all our joy from God." According to the Báb, in the Day of Judgment, which is not far distant, this terrible sentence will be heard: "All things shall perish, except divine nature." But this universal destruction will not fall upon those who have known the truth, who have read the holy books, or who shall implore the divine mercy at the last moment. Paradise is defined by the Báb as "the love of God which has nothing more to desire, the love of God fully satisfied." *It is easy to see that the doctrines*

of the Báb could not be reconciled with the traditions and faith of Islam, and the social morality taught therein was more likely even than the theology to render the Báb hostile to the official religion. He attacked the fundamental vices of Mohammedan society; he condemned polygamy and censured the seclusion and veiling of women, and by abolishing the laws which forbade the intercourse of true believers with unbelievers, he introduced a new element of progress into Persian society. The rank which the Báb assumed did not fail to attract the attention of the authorities. His pantheistic mysticism led him to promulgate a particular doctrine with reference to revelation, and especially with reference to himself as the expounder of revelation. Thus, although all men were said to come forth equally from the bosom of the Deity, yet they did not all represent him in the same degree, and only a very few of them received the mission of disclosing the divine thoughts to mortals: these are the prophets, whom the Báb describes as the living word of God. Each of the predecessors of the Báb had prepared the way for his successor, but in the Báb himself it was no longer a mere prophet who had come down upon earth, but prophecy itself, of which he was the culminating point, and which he exercised simultaneously and mysteriously with eighteen other persons, male and female, who were imbued with the same spirit. These nineteen holy persons have but one common soul, and each on his death transmits to his successor that part which he possessed of the common soul, which, when added to the original soul, fits him for the mysterious labours he is to perform.

In addition to these innovations, he wished to effect a total revolution in the daily habits and customs of his disciples. Having fixed upon the number nineteen as the sacred number, and as the mystic bond which united earth to heaven, he determined that that number should govern all things capable of enumeration and division. Thus the year was divided into nineteen months, the month into nineteen days, the day into nineteen hours, and the hour into nineteen minutes; and so also with the division of weights, of measures, and of coins; the same number was also to be used in the division of the offices for the administration of the new society when it was thoroughly established.

The exasperated Mullahs now thought they had found a golden opportunity for revenge; they cried out loudly against his apostasy, his sacrilege, and his blasphemy; and they succeeded in persuading the civil functionaries that they had discovered the germs of a dangerous political conspiracy. Both parties appealed to the government at Teheran to crush the bold innovator.

Mohammed Shah, who was then ruling over Persia, was an indolent and invalid prince; the only course he took was to impose silence on all the parties; and, to provide against any disturbance, he ordered the governor of Shiraz not to allow the Báb to go beyond the limits

of his own house. These mild measures only served further to exasperate the Mullahs, and to swell the ranks of the Bábys. A crowd of proselytes joined them, coming from all classes in Persia; merchants, artisans, learned men, and even ministers of the official religion, flocked to Shiraz.

The strength to which the Bábys had now attained stirred up the ambition of some restless spirits, and induced a belief that they might triumph by violence over the followers of other creeds. The Báb took no part in this change from the original constitution of the society; whether from natural gentleness of character, or from respect to the sovereign, or from a sincere feeling that violence was foreign to a divine mission, he remained quietly at Shiraz. But a fiery apostle, a priest of Khorassan, named Hossein, succeeded in infusing a warlike spirit into the Bábys, and in giving a military form to the ranks of the believers. Hossein's vast learning, unflinching daring, and wonderful capacity, rendered him an object of admiration even to his bitterest enemies. He took upon himself the part of action, leaving to the Báb, who was called the Sublime Highness, the part of speculation. Hossein was the first missionary of the new faith, and he preached its doctrines with immense success, not only in the Khorassan, his native country, but also in the province of Irak, at Ispahan, and as far as Kashan. He set out for Teheran in the hope of accomplishing there the work he had so successfully commenced; but on his arrival there he was silenced by the same means which had checked his master's progress. He was forbidden to preach in public, but he was not prevented from expounding his religion privately. Mohammed Shah and his prime minister, excited by their curiosity, condescended to listen to one of his addresses; but enjoined him, under penalty of death, to go and preach his doctrines elsewhere than in the capital.

The zeal of Hossein soon attracted two other converts to imitate his example. One of these was a learned man like Hossein, and a devout person whom the people up to that time had honoured as a saint, his name was Hadjy-Mohammed; the other was a lady of high rank, named Zerryn Tadj, "The Crown of Gold," who, on account of her extraordinary beauty, had received the surname of Gourret-oul-Ayn, or "The Consolation of the Eyes." Her beauty was, however, amongst the least of her good qualities; learning, eloquence, spotless reputation, and fervid enthusiasm combined to render her a most important convert, and a fit leader. She received from the Bábys the appellation of Her Highness the Pure; and while she inveighed against the seclusion to which her sex was condemned, she had the courage to show herself in public unveiled, to the great scandal of all orthodox Mohammedans. Her purity, her courage, and her eloquence gave a wonderful impulse to the religion of the Báb, and yet, strange to say, she had never even seen the Báb himself. Her father was one of the

most celebrated lawyers and theologians of the country, whilst her husband and her father-in-law were ministers of high rank of the Mussulman religion; thus they were all naturally hostile to the tenets of Ali-Mohammed. It was in their fierce and angry denunciations of the Báb, that she first heard of the new religion, and struck by the chance which it seemed to afford to her sex of escaping from the slavery and degradation imposed upon it by Eastern society, she determined to inquire for herself, and entering upon a correspondence with Mirza-Ali-Mohammed, she became converted to his religion, by the arguments contained in his letters. In spite of the prayers and threats of the two families, she left all that was most dear to her, and went forth to preach the religion of liberty in the streets and public places of her native town Kaswyn, and afterwards throughout the neighbouring towns. The three apostles of the religion of the Báb now determined to hold a conference; and at their meeting the task of the spiritual conquest of Persia was divided between them. Hossein took the southern provinces, Hadjy-Mohammed the northern provinces, and the "Consolation of the Eyes" undertook the western provinces. It was not yet time for a second attack upon the capital, and the eastern parts of the empire. At first their work progressed smoothly, and as long as their adversaries were content with abusing and denouncing them, the apostles of the new faith were satisfied with simply preaching its doctrines; but as soon as they discovered that their adversaries, taking advantage of the anarchy which reigned in many parts of Persia, had determined to destroy them by force, they rose up in arms, and Hossein became their commander. The small band of followers which Hossein had collected in the Khorassan united with the recruits drawn from the Mazendéran by Hadjy-Mohammed, and the two leaders found themselves at the head of a compact little army, the numbers of which increased daily as new disciples flocked to their standard. They now thought themselves strong enough not only to ward off attack, but even to subdue their opponents. To rouse the enthusiasm of the soldiers of the new faith, a popular leader was required; such a one was found in the "Consolation of the Eyes," who, putting herself at their head, boldly and successfully fulfilled the mission which had been allotted to her. Her presence in the camp was alone sufficient materially to increase the number of the followers of the Báb, and crowds of people came from all sides to see her, and to listen to her impassioned eloquence.

By a stroke of policy, Hossein gave to his superior officers the names of the twelve imams and of the other descendants of Ali, whose souls he asserted lived again in them. Thus he gave new enthusiasm to his followers, while he supplied a link by which the new religion was connected with the ancient national form of worship. All were now eager for the fray; but it came sooner than was expected. Me-

reddin Shah, the successor of the indolent Mohammed Shah, after a successful campaign against the insurgents who disturbed the beginning of his reign, determined to crush the Bábys. Orders were given to the authorities of Mazendáran to march at once on the followers of the Báb, and to destroy them utterly. The first place attacked was the fortress which Hossein had erected in a place called the Pilgrimage of the Sheikh Tebersy, and which contained a garrison of two thousand men, furnished with provisions and with all the means of resisting a siege of some duration. M. Gobineau says that three small armies, under the command of one of the best Persian generals, successively assailed the walls of the fortress, and were beaten off with great loss. The government felt that it must put forth all its strength if it wished to crush the new sectaries.

A fourth expedition, consisting of a much larger number of troops, was sent against the Bábys, who now had to endure the miseries of a protracted siege. Their provisions were soon exhausted, and they barely contrived to sustain life by eating the flesh of the few horses which were killed in battle, and by feeding on the bark of trees, and on the scanty grass which grew in the ditches of the fortress. For four months they had to seek shelter in holes which they dug behind the ruins of the fortress which was set on fire by their opponents, and whence they had to rush at any moment to repel the constant attacks of the besiegers. Their chief was killed in their last final struggle, and there only remained two hundred and fourteen dying persons, including many women, who in vain tried to assuage the pangs of hunger by chewing the leather of their belts, and of the scabbards of their sabres. They had attempted to make flour by grinding the bones of the dead. Reduced to the last extremity, they resolved to capitulate on condition of their lives being spared; but the leaders of the royal army, regardless of their word, caused them to be put to death with horrible torture. In the bodies of many of them was found raw grass on which they had made their last meal. This disaster did not prevent the Bábys from making progress in other parts of Persia, and their greatest success was at Zendjân, where, however, a most terrible trial awaited them, and where, in a dreadful struggle, not less sanguinary than that at the fortress of the Sheikh Tebersy, Bábysm was to lose its most influential leaders.

At Zendjân, Mohammed Ali held the same position which Hossein had held in the Khorassan; he had gathered fifteen thousand men around him, and in his first encounters with the royal troops he had driven back forces twice as large as his own. It seemed as if the Bábys would now have succeeded in establishing their republic, but they were overwhelmed by the superior numbers of their enemies, and Zendjân fell after a most gallant and protracted resistance. Mohammed Ali, like Hossein, fell in battle at the head of his troops, and the

few who survived were caught in the same trap as those who capitulated at the fortress of Sheikh Tebersy. They were promised their lives, but were treacherously put to death or carried to Teheran to undergo torture at the hands of their victors.

The Shah now thought that he could put an end to Bábysm by the death of its founder, forgetting that nothing could give greater strength to the religion he had founded than his martyrdom. After the capture of Zendjân, the Báb was taken to the citadel of Tebriz. He continued quietly to work, to study, and to pray; his gentleness and his courage surprised his enemies; he was loaded with chains, and dragged through the streets and bazaars of Tebriz; he was pelted with mud and struck in the face, without giving vent to a single murmur. Two of his disciples who had shared his captivity were chained with him. One of them, Seyd Hossein, being informed that he might obtain pardon by insulting him, suddenly turned round and cursed him, spitting in his face; but even this last outrage did not move the Báb from his resignation. He was suspended by ropes from the ramparts of Tebriz, and a troop of soldiers ordered to shoot him, but he escaped as if by a miracle, the shot only cutting the ropes without wounding him, and the soldiers cut him to pieces with their swords. His only consolation was to hear the disciple who had remained faithful to him, ask him as he was on the point of death, "Master, art thou satisfied with me?"

Of the leaders of Bábysm, Gourret-oul-Ayn, "the Consolation of the Eyes," was now the sole survivor; she had not long to wait before she also suffered the same fate as her master. A general proscription was decreed against the Bábys; to be a follower of the Báb was to be declared guilty of high treason; and thousands of innocent persons were tortured and put to death; the victims, many of them women and children, singing as they were being massacred the words, "In truth we come from God and we return to God: in truth we belong to God and we return to Him." Gourret-oul-Ayn was seized by Mahmoud Khan, but treated with great respect; and, whether from admiration for her beauty and her virtue, or out of fear of the popular favour on her side, she was promised life and liberty on condition of denying the faith to which she belonged. Mahmoud Khan came back one day from the royal camp, and told her that he had good news for her. "You will be taken to Niaveran, and they will ask you if you are one of the Bábys; all you have to say is 'No,' and no one will molest you." Her answer was, "You are wrong, Mahmoud Khan, you should give me a better message, but you do not know it yourself; to-morrow you yourself will have me burnt alive, and I shall render a fitting testimony to God and to His Eternal Highness." Mahmoud could not believe that she would not save her life, and again and again he begged her to reflect. She said she scorned to preserve for a few days longer a

form which must soon perish, and warned him to prepare also for death. "For," said she, "the king whom you serve so zealously will not reward you; on the contrary, he will cause you to perish by a cruel death." Four years afterwards her prophecy was fulfilled, Mahmoud Khan, by order of the king, had his beard pulled out, was beaten with rods, and finally strangled; she herself, as she had foretold, being burnt alive on the day following her conversation with Mahmoud, but her name became holy in the memory of the Bábys, and the example of her heroic self-sacrifice attracted more partisans to Bábysm than all the exhortations of its preachers. The same day the penitent Seyd Hossein, who had denied his master, came to lay down his life with his fellow-disciples. Bábysm now lost its political and military character, and once more became simply a religion. A youth sixteen years old, named Mirza Yahya, was chosen as successor to the Báb, and took up his residence at Baghdad. Here, sheltered from persecution, on the frontier of two Mohammedan empires, and in the midst of a great concourse of travellers and pilgrims, the new religion has planted its standard, and continues its mission, which seems far from being as yet completed.

We have already given a sketch of the theology of Bábysm, and it now remains to describe the most marked characteristics of its morality and policy; for as the Bábys were confident that they would conquer the world, it was necessary that they should publish to the world the principles on which they intended to found their government of it. The religion of the Báb addresses itself to the mind rather than to the body; thus it prefers meditation to prayer, and solitary prayer, as being most akin to meditation, to prayer in public. The functions of its ministers are limited to the duties of praying and teaching.

The religion of the Báb does not desire any painful sacrifices from mankind. "All that is demanded of you by the Most High is love and contentment," says the Báb. The general character of its morality is summed up in two obligations: "Charity towards others, and circumspection as regards oneself." The first form of charity is doing good to the poor and the wretched. Hospitality is just as much an obligation as almsgiving; it must be practised at least once a year towards a poor man or a stranger, even if one have nothing more to offer than a cup of cold water; and rich men are to invite to their table a number of poor guests proportionate to their wealth. In the Book of Precepts it is written, "O ye rich, enrich the poor on the part of your Lord;" but, on the other hand, it is forbidden to give to beggars, for to beg is sinful. If the religion of the Báb requires its followers to contribute as much as possible to the common happiness, still more does it require that one should do no harm to one's neighbour, even though one should have received injury at his hands. Violence is not to be met with violence, nor

injury by injury; discourtesy and want of civility is stigmatised as a sin, and moderation of language in argument is classed amongst the virtues. Women and children are especially to be cared for; and the Báb is not satisfied with having delivered women from the slavery to which they are subjected in the East; he is not satisfied with raising them to the proper rank of wives by abolishing polygamy and divorce, nor with prohibiting their forced seclusion, but he lays down that they must be especially respected and honoured, and that they should be allowed to act with perfect liberty in all matters which cannot hurt their honour or their health. Their natural taste for elegance should be indulged as much as possible; with true Eastern gallantry, he says, "Adorn your ornament; glorify your glory." Contrary to the usages of all Asiatic countries, he admitted women to the tables and meetings of men; but he warns the ministers of religion not to enter into long conversations with them—"beyond eighteen words forbear to continue your speech with them; you can derive no good from more."

Remembering the severity with which he had been punished at school, he forbids any one to beat a child who is under five years of age, and after that age he enjoins that he should be chastised with gentleness. He warns parents to consider the health of their children as much as their education, and adds, with true affection for them, "allow them all that can make them happy." He orders his disciples not to overwork or overburden the animals they employ. The true believer is to be charitable and indulgent to others, and not to be too severe with himself; fasting and other trials of endurance are forbidden him after the age of forty-two, and long and distant journeys are to be avoided. His virtues are to be, so to say, every-day virtues—not heroic virtues, which require to be brought forth by extraordinary circumstances. All that can render life agreeable and increase his gratitude to his Creator, is allowed to the true believer, so long as he does nothing which can injure him; but opium and fermented liquors are forbidden. The Báb and his eighteen colleagues hold almost all the property of the society, and have the right to levy very heavy taxes. With the money thus collected they are able to maintain the priests, keep up the religious buildings, assist the poor, alleviate distress, and educate the faithful. There is not much originality in this system, and its dogmas are chiefly borrowed from ancient systems. Its morality is even below that of the Stoics. Its ideal city is an Utopia, which would infallibly degenerate into a despotism. Its most original feature is the principle of the permanent incarnation of the Deity in a body of nineteen persons. It is, however, so much more imaginative, more liberal, and more enlightened than Islamism; and it has done so much good by abolishing polygamy and raising the status of women, that it possesses advantages over it which make it a formidable rival, destined, perhaps, some day to

displace the official religion, and to form the connecting link of transition between Europe and Asia.

SIGNALLING VERSUS SHOUTING.

TO THE EDITOR.

SIR,—I regret exceedingly that I am under the necessity of opening this letter by alluding to a purely personal matter. To do this is against my principles, but if I would give full weight to what is to follow, it is absolutely necessary that those principles should be sacrificed. Let me state, then, that I have recently had the misfortune to partially lose my speaking voice. The inconvenience of this loss is very great, for though I can manage, under specially favourable circumstances, to make myself heard when conversing quietly with my friends in a corner, I can do no more. When I am in a room in which general conversation is being carried on in at all a loud key, when I am in the street and exposed to competition with all sorts of street noises, above all when I am riding in a carriage of any sort or kind, however easy or skilfully hung, any remarks I may be tempted to make are totally inaudible.

Imagine, then, to what a condition of complete practical dumbness I find myself reduced when rattling over the London stones in a street cab. The tremendous din, the rattling, the bumping, the jingling, and the grinding which attend the progress of these noisy little vehicles through the streets of our metropolis are familiar to us all. We all have to shout at the top of our voices when we desire to make a remark, and the consequence is that it may be observed that most people when making a cab voyage are decidedly prone to be taciturn.

But, however uncommunicative we may be with regard to our fellow-passengers, however severely we may repress our conversational tendencies, dismissing many a tempting observation which rises to our lips, and steadily and consistently repressing any inclination to the narration of anecdote, there is still one form of conversation which we cannot dispense with, and that is the kind of conversation which, under certain circumstances, is carried on in yells and shouts between the passenger in the interior of the cab, and the driver on the box. Dialogue of this sort there is, for the most part, no evading. It is true that if you want to go to the Polytechnic Institution, or the St. James's Hall, you can inform your cabman of your desire at starting, and he will probably drive you straight to your destination; but when you are bound for some little known, and, above all, some new neighbourhood in the suburbs—some Elizabeth-terrace, or Upper Shrewsbury-gardens, Notting-hill, for instance—then, from the moment of your leaving the great main thoroughfare which leads in the direction of your suburb, it behoves you to have your head and the greater part of *your body out of window*, and to howl uninterruptedly, "*To the right!*" "*To the left!*"

"No, no, not up there—stop! you can't get through—you must turn back!" and the like. This is a highly disagreeable exercise. The possessor of the strongest voice can barely make himself heard by dint of immense exertion, and even that favoured personage generally finds that he has been carried some quarter of a mile past his proper turning before he has been able to convince the driver that his road lies to the right or left instead of straight on. Living in Elizabeth-terrace, as above, for some years, I used to find the wild screams of wanderers in cabs as they were driven about that intricate neighbourhood, towards dinner time, a serious and alarming annoyance. No cab ever approached which did not exhibit a contracted human being protruding through its window, howling and gesticulating madly.

But what is this necessity of making one's voice heard above the noise ground by the wheels of a cab out of a newly macadamised street; there is not traffic enough to wear the road smooth in Elizabeth-terrace; to one whom circumstances and asthma have temporarily left in a nearly voiceless condition! Carried past any turning with which I had any concern, whirled round corners entirely out of my line of route, unable to reach the driver with my umbrella, unable to let down the front windows, in consequence of an absence of straps for that purpose, and wholly incapable of making myself heard though trying till I was black in the face, and presenting so alarming an appearance to passers-by, that they would stop in their walk expectant of my demise by suffocation, I have sometimes sunk back in my seat, and, giving way to despair, have suffered inexorable Fate to conduct me whither it would.

It has been necessary for me to enter into all these particulars, for which I beg humbly to apologise, in order that I might make known to you, Editorial Sir (and through you to a discerning public), how it came about that, urged on and stimulated by that necessity which is the mother of invention, I came to hit upon an idea.

That idea is, that those who ride in cabs should have the means of directing the driver which way to go, without moving from their seats, without putting their heads and bodies out of window, without screaming themselves hoarse.

There are two ways in which this might be accomplished: either by means of a flexible speaking tube passing through the front of the vehicle, and with its mouth brought close to the cabman's ear; or, still more simply, by means of a couple of check-strings, one attached to the right arm, and the other to the left arm of the driver. To the first of these plans objection may be made. Although the speaking tube answers perfectly well for private carriages, it might not be equally suitable to public conveyances. In the case of your own carriage you know who uses the instrument; but in the case of a cab many persons might object to put their lips to a

mouth-piece which had been publicly used. There would also be some expenditure necessitated in fitting the London cabs with such an apparatus. No such objection could possibly apply to the other plan. A couple of holes bored in the wooden division which separates the two front windows of the conveyance, and a piece of worsted cord passed through each, would be all that need be provided.

Were some plan of this sort once adopted, there need be no more struggling through windows, no more ineffectual attempts to reach the driver with umbrellas, no more shouting directions rendered inaudible by the sound of the wheels. When the "fare" wanted to go to the right, he would touch the right check-string, when he wanted to go to the left, he would touch the left check-string, and when he desired to stop, he could pull both. Thus the occupant of the vehicle would be virtually his own coachman; he would drive the cabman, and the cabman would drive the horse.

In our open hansom cabs, a system of telegraphy is already established between the fare and the driver, the former communicating his wishes to the latter by means of certain indicative movements of his stick or umbrella. This plan answers completely, and the being able to dispense with the shouting process, even in the instance of those who have voices to shout with, is conducive to good temper, a tranquil expression of countenance, and the dignity of personal repose; all irreconcilable with anxious struggling and shouting, even if such shouting were efficacious, which is certainly not the case, for his efforts will infallibly disappoint, as well as discompose, the shouter, and will bring him to the melancholy conviction that under such circumstances at any rate, if under no other,

UNA VOCE POCO FA.

THE WAKE OF TIM O'HARA.

I.

To the Wake of O'Hara
Came companie;—

All St. Patrick's Alley

Was there to see,

With the friends and kinemen
Of the family.

On the old deal table Tim lay, in white,
And at his pillow the burning light;
While pale as himself, with the tear on her cheek,
The mother received us,—too full to speak.
But she heap'd the fire, and with never a word,
Set the black bottle upon the board,
While the company gathered, one and all,
Men and women, big and small,—
Not one in the alley but felt a call
To the Wake of Tim O'Hara.

II.

At the face of O'Hara

All white with sleep,

Not one of the women

But took a peep,

And the wives new wedded

Began to weep.

The mothers clustered around about,
And praised the linen and laying out,

For white as snow was his winding-sheet,
And all looked peaceful, and clean, and sweet.
The old wives, praising the blessed dead,
Clustered thick round the old press-bed,
Where O'Hara's widow, tattered and torn,
Held to her bosom the babe new born,
And stared all round her, with eyes forlorn,
At the Wake of Tim O'Hara.

III.

For the heart of O'Hara

Was true as gold,

And the life of O'Hara

Was bright and bold,

And his smile was precious

To young and old.

Gay as a guinea, wet or dry,
With a smiling mouth and a twinkling eye!
Had ever an answer for chaff or fun,
Would fight like a lion with any one!
Not a neighbour of any trade
But knew some joke that the boy had made!
Not a neighbour, dull or bright,
But minded something, frolic or fight,
And whispered it round the fire that night,
At the Wake of Tim O'Hara!

IV.

"To God be glory

In death and life!

He's taken O'Hara

From trouble and strife,"

Said one-eyed Biddy,

The apple-wife.

"God bless old Ireland!" said Mistress Hart,
Mother to Mike of the donkey-cart:
"God bless old Ireland till all be done!
She never made wake for a better son!"
And all joined chorus, and each one said
Something kind of the boy that was dead.
The bottle went round from lip to lip,
And the weeping widow, for fellowship,
Took the glass of old Biddy, and had a nip,
At the Wake of Tim O'Hara.

V.

Then we drank to O'Hara

With drams to the brim,

While the face of O'Hara

Looked on so grim,

In the corpse-light shining

Yellow and dim.

The drink went round again and again;
The talk grew louder at every drain;
Louder the tongues of the women grew;
The tongues of the boys were loosing too!
But the widow her weary eyelids closed,
And, soothed by the drop of drink, she dozed;
The mother brightened and laughed to hear
Of O'Hara's fight with the grenadier,
And the hearts of us all took better cheer
At the Wake of Tim O'Hara.

VI.

Tho' the face of O'Hara

Looked on so wan,

In the chimney corner

The row began;

Lame Tony was in it,

The oyster-man.

For a dirty low thief from the north came near
And whistled "Boyne Water" in his ear,
And Tony, with never a word of grace,
Hit out his fist in the blackguard's face.
Then all the women screamed out for fright;
The men that were drunkest began to fight;
Over the chairs and tables they threw;
The corpse-light tumbled, the trouble grew;
The new-born joined in the hulloballoo,
At the Wake of Tim O'Hara.

VII.

"Be still! Be silent!
Ye do a sin!
Shame be his portion
Who dares begin!"—
'Twas Father O'Connor
Just entered in;

And all looked ashamed, and the row was done:
Sorry and sheepish looked every one;
But the priest just smiled quite easy and free—
"Would you wake the poor boy from his sleep?"
said he.

And he said a prayer, with a shining face,
Till a kind of a brightness filled the place;
The women lit up the dim corpse-light;
The men were quieter at the sight;—
And the peace of the Lord fell on all that night
At the Wake of Tim O'Hara.

A GENTLEMAN OF THE PRESS.

IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER II.

WE left Defoe in our last, emerging from the chrysalis of his prison into the full-fledged butterfly state of liberty. As soon as he had paid his fees, and left the doors of Newgate behind him, he sought the fresh breezes of the rural districts. With his bodily health somewhat impaired by his long confinement, but with a spirit undaunted as of old, he retired for awhile to Bury St. Edmunds with his family, to recruit his energies. But the brain, and the right hand with the pen in it, were not idle. Pamphlet followed upon pamphlet, treatise upon treatise, book upon book, in such profusion, that the mere catalogue of them would occupy pages. But in addition to his writings in support of the Whig government, he seems to have been otherwise employed in its behalf. Writing ten years afterwards of this period of his life, he states that "being delivered from the distress I was in, her Majesty, who was not satisfied to do me good by a single act of her bounty, had the goodness to think of taking me into her service, and I had the honour to be employed in honourable though secret services by the interposition of my first benefactor." But Defoe, notwithstanding this royal and ministerial favour, was not yet in smooth water. The ruin of the brick and pantile business sat heavily upon him, and merciless creditors (some of them let loose upon him by his political enemies), harassed him with vexatious law-suits and exorbitant demands. To such an extent did the persecution prevail, that he found it expedient for awhile to absent himself from his home, and travel incognito in the south-west of England. But even in this emergency Harley continued to be his friend, and gave him a *commission*, wherever he could act with

safety, to lend a helping hand at the general election to any Whig and liberal candidate in the south-western boroughs who might need the support of his pen or his advice. During this somewhat mysterious peregrination, Defoe travelled about eleven hundred miles on horseback, and not only found time to attend meetings, public, private, and social, to advise and consult with candidates and local celebrities, but to carry on his Review, and write the whole of it from beginning to end.

Defoe's most important work after this time, and when he had settled with his pantile creditors under the supervision of the Court of Bankruptcy, was his Essay on Removing National Prejudices against a Union with Scotland: Part the First. This union, as Defoe well knew, had been the favourite project of his beloved master, King William; and when the idea was taken up by the administration of which his friend Harley was the leading spirit, Defoe went into the matter with heart and soul. The First Part of the Essay being well received, was followed by Part the Second, and rendered such good service that the author was employed by the government on a mission to Scotland, to carry on in that country the good work he had performed in England, by rendering popular the proposed legislative union of the two countries. Before starting on his mission, Defoe was introduced for the first time to Queen Anne, and had the honour of kissing hands on his appointment. He resided in Edinburgh for three years, and appears to have made many friends in the Scottish capital, and to have taken a liking both to the people and the country.

He had been two years in Edinburgh, doing his utmost to popularise the Union, which was still under debate in the Scottish Parliament, when he published his first avowed work since he had quitted London, entitled *Caledonia: a Poem in Honour of Scotland and the Scots Nation: in Three Parts*. The love for Scotland exhibited in this composition remained in his heart as long as he lived. At one time, indeed, he had serious thoughts of taking up his permanent residence in that country. He paid it several visits in the service of the government, edited for awhile the *Edinburgh Courant*, and interested himself in plans for the development of its trade and commerce, its linen manufactures, and its fisheries. He also published his ideas on the subject of the improvements to be effected in the picturesque old city of Edinburgh, recom-

mended the filling up of the North Loch at the foot of the Castle Rock, and suggested the laying out of a new city, on the very site on which it was afterwards built. In Edinburgh he published his *History of the Union of Great Britain*: a work which his exertions had greatly aided to bring to the historical point. So intimate a knowledge did he acquire of Scotland, that after the Act of Union had been accomplished, and when there was reason to believe that a Jacobite rebellion, instigated by France, was in progress, Defoe, who had in the interval returned to London, was despatched to Scotland on a second secret mission. Previous to his departure he had his second interview with Queen Anne, upon which occasion, he says, "Her Majesty was pleased to tell me, with a goodness peculiar to herself, that she had much satisfaction in my former services, that she had appointed me for another affair, which was something *nice* (sic), and that my lord treasurer should tell me the rest." This mission, the precise object of which appears never to have been divulged by Defoe, though he says "it was an errand which was far from being unfit for a sovereign to direct or an honest man to perform," was probably, as Mr. Lee and his other biographers suppose, to direct the public opinion of Scotland against the principles and purposes of the Jacobites, and to confirm the minds of the people in favour of the Hanoverian succession. Defoe felt strongly on the subject, and at the first rumour of a French invasion of Scotland, to support a rising in favour of the Pretender, recommended the offer of a reward for the capture of the Pretender, and the arrest of forty or fifty of the Highland chieftains and other foremost Jacobites. "This done," he added, "the Pretender may come when he pleases; he'll meet with but cold entertainment in the North of Britain."

Space would fail us if we were to attempt to go minutely through the services and the writings of Defoe from this period to the imprisonment of his friend and benefactor, Harley, Earl of Oxford, and the death of Queen Anne. His pen was never idle, and as he took his side in politics, and a very marked and decisive one, at a time when men's passions were greatly excited, and the bosom of society was still throbbing and heaving with the under-swell of a revolution that had not yet consolidated itself into an unchangeable fact, it is not to be supposed that the number of his enemies was not as great as that of his friends, and that his enemies were not

louder in their attacks upon him than his friends in their defence of him. One of the most pertinacious charges brought against him was, that he wrote for hire, always coupled with the dirty innuendo that he wrote for the side which paid best, and that he had no personal predilections for one side more than the other. Defoe never denied that he lived by the rewards of his literary labour, but with manly indignation repelled the calumny that he ever wrote in opposition to his honest conviction. "If," said he, in a strain of true eloquence, "I have espoused a wrong cause; if I have acted in a good cause in an unfair manner; if I have for fear, favour, or by the bias of any man in the world, great or small, acted against what I always professed, or what is the known interest of the nation; if I have in any way abandoned that glorious principle of truth and liberty which I was ever embarked in, and which I trust I shall never, through fear or hope, step one inch back from; if I have done thus, then, as Job says, in another case, let thistles grow instead of wheat, and cockles instead of barley. Then, and not till then, may I be esteemed a mercenary, a missionary, a spy, or what you please. But if the cause be just; if it be the peace, security, and happiness of both nations; if I have done it honestly and effectually, how does it alter the case if I have been fairly encouraged, supported, and rewarded in the work, as God knows I have not? Does the mission disable the messenger, or does it depend upon the merit of the message? Cease your inquiry, then, about my being sent by this or that person or party, till you can agree who it is, when I shall be glad of an opportunity to own it, as I see no cause to be ashamed of my errand. Oh, but 'tis a scandalous employment to write for bread! The worse for him, gentlemen, that he should take so much pains, run so many risks, make himself so many enemies, and expose himself to so much scurrilous treatment for bread, and not get it neither. Assure yourselves, had not Providence found out other and unlooked-for supplies by mere wonders of goodness, you had long ago had the desire of your hearts—to starve him out of this employment. But, after all, suppose you say true—that all I do is for bread—which I assure you is very false—what are all the employments in the world pursued for, but for bread? But though it has been quite otherwise in my case, I am easy, and can depend upon that promise, 'Thy bread shall be given thee,

and thy water shall be sure.' I have espoused an honest interest, and have steadily adhered to it all my days; I never forsook it when it was oppressed, I never made a gain by it when it was advanced; and I thank God it is not in the power of all the courts and parties in Christendom to bid a price high enough to buy me off from it, or make me desert it."

Before coming to the third and concluding period of Defoe's life, when, after the accession of George the First, he is supposed to have retired from the political arena, and to have devoted the remainder of his days to the composition of less ephemeral works, the immortal story of Robinson Crusoe among the number, let us glance a little while at the subjects unconnected with party politics that occupied him. Free trade was familiar to his thoughts a dozen years before Adam Smith was born, and a generation before the grandfathers of Peel, Cobden, and Bright were thought of. In a pamphlet published in 1713, on the recently concluded treaty of peace and commerce with France, he expatiated largely on the advantages of free trade: asserting that the international reduction and abolition of the Customs duties would increase trade, cheapen commodities, promote national and individual wealth, and become, in the course of time, the truest guarantee of peace among all nations. What more or what better could Mr. Gladstone or Mr. Bright say in the year 1869? Under the pseudonym of Andrew Moreton, in a pamphlet entitled *Augusta Triumphans*; or, the Way to make London the most Flourishing City in the World, he suggested six methods for the moral, intellectual, and physical advancement of the metropolis. These were, first, "the establishment of a university where gentlemen may have academical education under the eye of their friends." This idea of Defoe was brought into practice a hundred years afterwards, and University College, in Gower-street, and King's College, in the Strand, testify to this generation the forethought of this remarkable man. Second, "to prevent child murder, &c., by establishing a hospital for foundlings." The good Captain Coram, in an after time, carried out this idea. Third, "the suppression of pretended madhouses, where many of the fair sex are unjustly confined by their husbands and others, and many widows are locked up for the sake of their jointure." The law in due time took up this idea also, and the licensing and visitation of

public and private madhouses and lunatic asylums were made, as Defoe suggested, a matter of public policy. Fourth, "to save our youth from destruction by clearing the streets of impudent strumpets, suppressing gaming tables, &c." This reform has only been partially carried out in our day, but none the less is the merit of Defoe for having suggested and urged it a century and a half ago. Fifth, "to avoid the extensive importation of foreign musicians by forming an academy of our own." This also has been done, though without the national effects anticipated. Sixth, "to save our lower class of people from utter ruin, by preventing the immoderate use of Geneva and other spirituous liquors." This, too, has been attempted, and still occupies the attention of theorists and philanthropists, though the end aimed at seems still as distant as when Defoe wrote. Another of Defoe's projects was to supersede the London watchmen of his day, whom he called "decrepit superannuated wretches, with one foot in the grave and the other ready to follow, and so feeble that a puff of breath could blow them down," and replace them by a watch of stout able-bodied men, "one man to every forty houses, twenty on one side of the way, and twenty on the other—the said men to be armed." It was fully a hundred years after Defoe's time that the late Sir Robert Peel acted on Defoe's idea, abolished the stupid old watchmen, and established what even now is sometimes called the "new" police. What, after all, would mere statesmanship be, if genius had not gone before it, preparing the way, and accustoming the minds of men to the new thing, which men will, somehow or other, never consent to accept until the idea of it has grown old and familiar?

The death of Queen Anne, like that of King William, marks an important epoch in the career of Defoe, who, as he says, had been "thirteen times rich and thirteen times poor, and felt all the difference between the closet of a king (or queen), and the dungeon in Newgate!" Yet Defoe, who had been in the confidence of two sovereigns and their advisers, was not destined to fall either into obscurity or idleness. The new king could not speak a word of English, differing in this respect from all his predecessors since the days of the earliest Plantagenets; and could not therefore know, except by report, how powerful an English writer Defoe was, and what good service he had rendered, and was yet capable of rendering, to the principles which

had seated the Hanoverian family upon the throne. Queen Anne, who had always, as a born Stuart, been coquetting more or less openly with the Jacobites and Tories, and other friends of her exiled father, had left a Tory ministry in power when she died. The new king, replaced it by a Whig administration; and dismissed from public office, great or small, every person who had been appointed by the ministers of his predecessors, whether those ministers were Whig, Tory, or Coalition. Among the number Defoe lost his employ in the secret service of the court, and was reduced to depend, as at an earlier period of his literary career, wholly upon his pen for his daily bread. He was growing old by this time, not so much by the pressure of years, he was but fifty-four, as by the pressure of hard work and anxiety, and he could not labour so diligently as of old. Early in the king's reign, and within a few months of the loss of the certain source of income which he had long enjoyed, the strong brain of the ready writer was smitten with apoplexy. For six weeks he lay in a precarious condition, but ultimately recovered so far as to take once more the keen interest in public affairs which he had always exhibited. The Jacobites, seeing no longer the chance of favour from George the First that they had enjoyed from Queen Anne, began to plot the rebellion, which soon afterwards culminated in Scotland, under the leadership of the Pretender, called by his English friends James the Third, and by his Scottish friends James the Eighth. Bishop Atterbury published at this juncture his well-known pamphlet, *English Advice to the Freeholders of England*, in which he all but openly advocated rebellion; spoke disrespectfully of the king; denounced the new ministers; and branded the whole body of the Whig and liberal party, as enemies to the Church, and the best interests of the nation. A proclamation offering a reward of one thousand pounds for the discovery of the author, and of five hundred pounds for the arrest of the printer, was speedily offered. Atterbury fled to avoid the consequences. Defoe, who had scarcely recovered from the severe attack which had prostrated him, wrote and published a reply to that *Traitorous Libel* (so he called it), in which there was no falling off of his literary energy, no diminution of his logical power, no cooling of his warm spirit of patriotism. This pamphlet, and one or two others of less note, written under the pseudonym of *One of the people called*

Quakers, have hitherto been considered the last political works of Defoe, before he retired finally to the pleasanter and quieter fields of general literature.

And this brings us to the accidental discovery in 1864, in the State Paper Office, of six previously unknown letters of Defoe, in his own handwriting, and undoubtedly genuine, addressed to Charles De la Faye, Esq., private secretary to the Lords Justices of Ireland in 1715, and confidential secretary to the Secretary of State in 1718. These letters range from the 12th of April to the 13th of June, 1718, and prove, on the decisive testimony of Defoe himself, that he was once more taken into the secret service of the government; that he again received a salary, or as he calls it "capitulations;" and that his pen, so far from being quiescent on party and political topics, and so wholly engrossed with fiction and general literature as had hitherto been supposed, was as active as ever on all the party polemics of his day. Not, it would appear, without the suspicion of his contemporaries.

It were to be wished that the service had been as honourable as the mission he had undertaken for the ministers of William the Third and Queen Anne; and that a man of such high character had not towards the close of his career done evil that good might come. Defoe himself explains his task to Mr. De la Faye in the second letter of the series. "My Lord Sunderland, to whose goodness I had many years ago been obliged, when I was in a secret commission sent to Scotland, was pleased to approve and continue this service and the appointment annexed; and with his lordship's approbation I introduced myself in the disguise of a translator of the foreign news, to be so far concerned in this weekly paper of *Mist's*, as to be able to keep it within the circle of a secret management, also to prevent the mysterious part of it, and yet neither *Mist*, nor any of those concerned with him to have the least guess or suspicion by whose direction I do it." And Defoe, the Whig par excellence, not only committed this deception upon *Mist*, the proprietor of the leading Tory and Jacobite paper of the day, but upon the proprietors of two other Tory papers, equally unsuspecting of treachery, *Dormer's News Letter* and the *Mercurius Politicus*. "Upon the whole, however," adds Defoe in the same confidential letter to Mr. De la Faye, so unexpectedly brought to light; "this is the consequence, that by this management the *Weekly Journal* (*Mist's*), and

Dormer's Letter, as also the *Mercurius Politicus*, which is in the same nature of management as the *Journal*, will always be kept, mistakes excepted, to pass as Tory papers; and yet be disabled and enervated so as to do no mischief, or give no offence to the government." . . . "I am posted for this service, among Papists, Jacobites, and enraged high Tories;—a generation, who I confess, my very soul abhors; I am obliged to hear traitorous expressions and outrageous words against his majesty's person and government, and his most faithful servants; and smile at all as if I approved it. I am obliged to father all the scandalous and indeed villanous papers that come, and keep them by me as if I would gather materials from them to put them into the *News*; nay, I often venture to let things pass which are a little shocking, that I may not render myself suspected. Thus I bow in the house of Rimmon, and most heartily recommend myself to his lordship's protection; as I may be undone the sooner, by how much the more faithfully I execute the commands I am under."

This service was so base toward the newspaper proprietors and the political party deceived, and was so unworthy of Defoe, as to have induced most people when the letters were discovered to indulge in the hope, that the letters might be forgeries. It is not so, however. The suspicion is baseless, the hope is fallacious, and the great Daniel Defoe did really act the unworthy part he describes, and did really sell the birthright of his personal honour for a mess of very dirty pottage. Mr. Lee, who looks with a kindly eye, and bears with a lenient hand, even upon this aberration from the line of strict moral rectitude on the part of his favourite author, employed himself very earnestly and assiduously for eighteen months on the track thus opened out, to discover the contributions of Defoe to the political literature of the fifteen last years of his life. The gatherings he has thus made, fill two large octavo volumes of nine hundred and ninety pages. Some of these are doubtless the work of Defoe's hand; but as Mr. Lee had no other clue for his guidance than that afforded by the letters to Mr. De la Faye—and as he can only judge by his own construction of the internal evidence of style, that they were written by Defoe in the various periodicals with which he is thus known to have been connected, it is very possible that he may have included many ar-

ticles and papers which belong to a meaner parentage. At all events, they can by no means be unequivocally accepted as the mintage of Defoe's brain, though presenting more or less similarity in tone, manner, and style, to hundreds of others which are known to be his. Whether his or not, these waifs and strays of a bygone time form a valuable seed-ground of history, and cannot be overlooked by any historian who would follow up the work begun by Macaulay, and give the world a true account of the troublous times between the Revolution of 1688 and the last disappearance of the Stuarts from the scene of British politics.

There were obscure passages in the history of the latter years of Defoe, which the discovery of these six letters helps materially to elucidate. Though Defoe had been really the good genius of *Mist*, and, by his suppression of treasonable articles intended for his journal, had saved him from imprisonment, the pillory, if not death upon the scaffold, *Mist*, when he became aware, after seven years, of the real position which Defoe occupied in his publishing office, and of the personal as well as party treachery involved, sought Defoe's life, and made a violent attack upon him with the sword: which Defoe repelled. At least, Mr. Lee, citing Defoe's own words, makes out a very good case for this supposition. And at the last, when Defoe's life-long fight was well nigh fought out, he was either threatened by *Mist*, or supposed himself to be threatened by *Mist*, to such an extent as to cause him to lose the balance of his mind. The fact of a persecution, real or imaginary, which embittered the close of his life, and sent him sorrowfully to the grave at the age of seventy-one, rests entirely upon a letter of Defoe to his son-in-law, Henry Baker, written on the 12th of August, 1730, after he had fled from his home, and hidden himself from his family. "My mind," he said, "is sinking under the weight of an affliction too heavy for my strength, and I look upon myself as abandoned of every comfort, every friend, and every relative, except such only as are able to give me assistance. . . . I am sorry to open my grief so far as to tell her" (his daughter Sophie, married to Mr. Baker) "it is *not* the blow which I received from a wicked, perjured, and contemptible enemy that has broken in upon my spirit, which, as she well knows, has carried me through greater disasters than these. But it has been the injustice, unkindness, and, I must say, the

inhuman dealing of my own son, which has both ruined my family, and, in a word, has broken my heart." It does not appear that this heavy charge against his son was other than the hallucination of a diseased mind, for Defoe had amply provided for his wife and two daughters, and his son had not the power, even if he had the will, which nowhere appears, to ruin either them or his father. "I depended upon him," adds Defoe; "I trusted him; I gave up two dear unprovided children into his hands; but he has no compassion, but suffers them and their poor dying mother to beg their bread at his door, and to crave, as it were, an alms, which he is bound under hand and seal, besides the most sacred promises, to supply them with, himself at the same time being in a profusion of plenty. It is too much for me. My heart is too full." This would be very tragical if true. It is equally tragic if it be the mere phantasm of a strong mind weakened by old age, hard work, and disappointment. Mr. Lee conjectures, and probably with reason, that "the mean, contemptible, and perjured enemy" who sent Defoe's poor brain wrong was no other than Mist, whom he had deceived and betrayed; and that in alarm, well or ill-founded, at something terrible which Mist might do to him, he had made over all his property to his son. However this be, Defoe never returned home to the wife and children whom he loved, but fled from corner to corner, hiding himself from the world during several months.

He at last returned to London early in 1731, and, on the 26th of April in that year, died, in his seventy-first year, "of a lethargy," at a lodging in Ropemaker's-alley, Moorfields. It does not appear that his eyes were closed by filial hands, or that his family were able to discover him. The brain had given way, the strong intellect had worn itself out, and he died the victim of his own delusions, knowing not of the kind hearts that were yearning to receive him, and pay the last attention to a beloved husband and father.

Peace to his memory! He was not the faultless monster whom the world never saw, nor was he the first man who did evil that good might come of it, and who paid the penalty always exacted, sooner or later, from the evil-doer. Let him who is without sin cast the first stone at his memory, and let those who are not without sin, and know how to make allowances for human frailty, speak with respect of the great Daniel Defoe: who sinned a little, but suf-

fered much, and left behind him a name as a statesman, a patriot, a philosopher, and a novelist, that shall last as long as the English language.

THE PLAGUE AT EYAM.

IN August, sixteen 'sixty-five, the wakes were, according to old custom, celebrated at Eyam, in Derbyshire, on the Sunday after St. Helen's Day. It is said that on this occasion an unusual number of visitors attended the wakes.

The plague was raging in London when, on the second or third of September following the wakes, a box, containing patterns of cloth and some clothes, was received by the tailor of Eyam from a relation in town, who had got them very cheap, and sent the bargain on; though men well understood the danger from contact with clothes, bedding, or furniture from infected houses. The journeyman of the tailor was one George Vicars, not a native of Eyam. It was he who opened the box, and, it would seem, in taking out the patterns and clothes, he at once observed a peculiar smell; for, exclaiming "How very damp they are!" he hung them before the fire to dry. Even while attending to them a violent sickness seized him, and, other serious symptoms following, the family and neighbours were greatly alarmed. Next day he was much worse, and became delirious. Large swellings rose on his neck and groin; on the third day the fatal plague spot appeared on his breast, and on the following night, September 6th, he died in horrible agony.

Thus began the plague at Eyam: a place now of seventeen hundred, then of three hundred and fifty, inhabitants. With some the first symptoms would be so slight that the earlier stages were endured without suspicion, and they would go about as usual, until a sudden faintness seized them, and the dark token on the breast appeared.

The second victim at Eyam was Edward, son of Edward Cooper, who died fourteen days after George Vicars, and by the end of September six others were dead of plague; two of these were named Thorpe, and, as four more of the same name were carried off in October, it is likely that this was the name of the tailor to whom the cloth was sent: it being stated that his whole family were among the first destroyed. Twenty-three persons died in October. The approach of winter checked the pestilence, and the register shows but seven deaths in November. In December, there were nine; in January, five; in March, six; in April, nine; in May, four. But, then, with the increase of heat came rapid increase of mortality. In June, nineteen died; in July, fifty-six; in August, seventy-eight; in September, twenty-four; in October, twenty, in which month the plague was stayed. Adding these numbers together, we find a total of two hundred and seventy-three deaths registered in rather more than a year from a population of three hundred

and fifty. Eight of these are said to have been deaths from other causes, leaving two hundred and sixty-five as the number destroyed by the plague.

The clergyman of the parish was the Reverend William Mompesson. It was early in June when his wife, a young, beautiful, and delicate woman, threw herself at his feet with their two little children of the ages of three and four, imploring him to depart with them from the devoted village. He was deeply moved by her appeal, but firmly withstood it. He positively refused to quit Eyam; showing his wife that duty to his flock forbade his desertion of it in the hour of danger; and that the providence of God had placed him there to counsel, strengthen, and comfort his people. But at the same time he urged her to fly with the children. This she refused to do, pleading fulfilment of her marriage vow in abiding with him for better and for worse, in sickness or health. It was finally agreed to send the children away to a relative in Yorkshire.

The mortality of Eyam has no parallel in the history of the plague. It has been naturally supposed that ill treatment of the disorder through the ignorance and poverty of the people, and some peculiarly unwholesome local circumstances, caused the unheard-of havoc. There is little doubt that one reason was the resolve of many people living close together not to fly from the infected spot. At the time of the appearance of the pest the more wealthy inhabitants left, and some erected solitary huts in the valleys and on the hills, where they lived out the season of danger in strict seclusion. These separated themselves from the rest before any taint had reached them.

When the fearful advance in June aroused the keenest dread the people were disposed to fly the place. It was then that their pastor energetically set himself against their purpose. He showed them the frightful consequences their flight would bring on the surrounding villages. He told them how surely disease was already at work with many among them, lying invisible in their bodies and clothes; he warned them against the guilt of carrying the plague far and wide; and he prevailed with them to lessen their own hope of safety in consideration for the lives of others. On his part, Mompesson promised to remain with them, and do all in his power to help and guide them. Associated with him in his labours, we find another clergyman named Stanley, then living at Eyam, who shared the danger and the toil of the time. These two arranged a plan. Mompesson wrote a letter to the Duke of Devonshire, then at Chatsworth (five miles from Eyam) telling him that if they could depend on adequate supplies of necessities, he had little doubt of prevailing with the people to remain in the village. The prompt reply was an expression of deep sympathy, and a promise that supplies should be provided. Mompesson and Stanley then fixed upon certain points at which such supplies *should be left*. A well or rivulet to the north of Eyam, still called "Mompesson's well," was

one of these. Another was at the cliff between Eyam and Stony Middleton, where stood a large stone trough: one of many to be found on the waysides of Derbyshire, into which little rills trickle for the refreshment of travellers and their cattle on the steep roads. These places were chosen as convenient for purification of money left by the villagers for special purchases: lest infection should be passed with it from hand to hand. Here, very early in the morning, supplies were left, which were fetched by persons whom Mompesson and Stanley appointed for the purpose. And here would be left the record of deaths, with other information for the world outside Eyam.

A line was drawn around the village, marked by well-known stones and fences; and it was agreed upon by all within it that the boundary should not be overstepped. No need to caution those beyond it! The fear of entering Eyam was general, and its inhabitants were left to meet their enemy alone.

Towards the end of June the plague increased, the passing bell ceased, the churchyard was no longer used for interment, the church doors were closed. Mompesson proposed to his daily-diminishing flock to meet on the border of a secluded dingle called "the Delf." There, he read prayers twice a week, and preached on Sundays, under a beautiful natural archway of grey rock, which is still called "Mompesson's pulpit," or "Cuckleth Church." His hearers seated themselves apart from one another, on the grassy slope before him. July came. Funeral rites were suspended, and the dead were buried, as soon as life had departed, by the hands of the survivors of the household, if any remained. Coffins and shrouds were no longer provided. An old door or chair would serve as a bier, and a shallow grave in a near field or garden would receive the corpse. Some were buried close to the doors, and some, it is affirmed, in the back part of the houses in which they died. Day saw dead bodies hurried along the village; night heard the frequent footsteps of those who bore them out. During July and August, dead and dying were in the same houses, dreadful wailings were heard on every side; on every face was seen unutterable grief. So long as any remained of a household it was difficult to find neighbours who would touch or bury its dead; but when the last of a household died, or there were none but dying in the house beside the dead, it was needful that some stranger should undertake the dangerous office.

Marshall Howe, a native of Eyam, now stood forward. He was a man of undaunted courage and gigantic stature. His name yet survives in Eyam. He had taken the distemper and recovered from it soon after its first appearance at Eyam, and to the belief that no one was liable to a second attack may be ascribed much of his intrepidity. Covetousness also greatly influenced him; he received money from the kindred of those he interred, and when he buried the last of a plague-destroyed household he claimed all that was in the cottage. When

he heard of one dying, or dead, for 'whose interment there was no relative left to provide, he would hasten to a neighbouring garden or field, open a grave, and then, tying a cord round the yet warm corpse, throw the other end over his shoulder, and drag it to the hole he had made.

The boundary line was generally well observed, but a few instances in which it was broken are on record. One person who crossed it from without, was a young woman from Corbor, two miles distant, who had married from Eyam just before the breaking out of the plague, leaving a mother there. Moved by anxiety, the daughter, unknown to her husband, went to visit her mother, and found the poor woman attacked by the disorder. Greatly terrified, she returned home, and on the following night was taken ill. Her husband and neighbours, learning where she had been, were nearly frantic with terror. On the next day she grew worse, and before night every symptom of the pest was manifest, and she died on this second day of her illness. Strange to say, no one was infected by her. Another who crossed the line from without, was a man living at Bubnall, near Chatsworth. His employment was carrying wood from the Chatsworth woods to the neighbouring villages. Against advice and entreaty, he insisted upon going, as usual, through Eyam. The day was wet and boisterous; he could get no one to help him unload his cart; he caught a severe cold; and shortly after returning was attacked with fever. So great was the alarm in Bubnall, that a man was set to watch his house, and the neighbours declared they would shoot him if he attempted to leave it. The Duke of Devonshire interfered to remove their alarm; he sent his doctor to make due inquiry, but the doctor would not go near the man. He took his station on one side the river Derwent, and spoke across the river to his patient on the other bank. The man had simply caught a cold, and was by this time better. It is evident, from several records, that strict watch was kept on some of the roads leading from Eyam. Thus, in the constables' account at Sheffield is an entry of charges "for those who kept the people of Eyam from Hullwood Springs" (ten miles from Eyam) "the time the plague was there." On the road between Tideswell and Eyam, a watch was set to prevent any person from Eyam entering the town on any pretext whatever. A poor woman, living in a part of Eyam called Orchard Bank, impelled by some pressing need, made her way to Tideswell one market day. She was duly stopped by the watch, and thus questioned: "Whence comest thou?" Fearing to say from Eyam, she replied, "From Orchard Bank." "Where is that?" asked the man. "Why, verily," answered she, being a wary woman, "in the land of the living." She was suffered by the watch to pass, and hastened to the market. There, some person soon recognised her, and, raising the cry, "The plague! the plague! a woman from Eyam! the plague! the plague! a woman

from Eyam!" the words resounded from all sides, and the poor frightened creature fled: a crowd gathering behind her, who, with shouts, stones, and sods, hunted her as they would have hunted a mad dog, for a full mile out of 'Tideswell. It is also told that, fuel being scarce at Eyam, some men attempted to get coal from some coal-pits beyond the line; but, imprudently telling whence they came, were driven off.

Eyam is divided east and west by a small stream, which crosses its street underground. The eastern side was the part visited so fearfully; the dwellers on the western side were but few, and those shut themselves up very closely, avoiding all intercourse with the other bank. It was towards the latter end of August, that a man living in this healthy portion heard by chance, late in the evening, that a dear sister of his, who lived in the eastern part, was taken with plague. Unknown to his family, he rose very early next day, determined to visit her. In great anxiety, he traversed the silent street, and reached her cottage. The door opened at a touch; the place was empty. His sister had died the preceding night, Marshall Howe had buried her in the adjoining garden, and rifled the house long before break of day. Full of grief, the man returned home, but not alone. The plague went with him, and he, and all his family, were, in a few days, laid in their graves.

The Reverend Thomas Stanley, one of the two ministering clergymen, had been for a short time rector of Eyam, but from some scruple of conscience had left its ministry, and resigned the living in 1662; but he continued to reside in Eyam until his death in 1670, serving his people still, and greatly beloved by them. His memory is still green in Eyam, where he is spoken of as the "great, good man." The house in which he lived was known as long as it stood, by the name of "Stanley's House." Mompesson had been inducted to Eyam only one year previous to its visitation; and the power he acquired over the wills and minds of his people would be inexplicable did we not remember that the loved and long-known Stanley was there to second every suggestion.

Mompesson was not a strong man, but he retained health during the whole of this trying time, though he was unremitting in visiting from house to house. Mrs. Mompesson is said to have been exceedingly beautiful and amiable, but of very delicate health, with consumption in her family. In the spring of the year her lungs had appeared affected, and Mompesson walked each morning, with her on his arm, in the fields contiguous to the rectory, in the hope that she would regain strength by this gentle exercise. On the morning of the 22nd of August they had walked together as usual, and she had been conversing with him on the accustomed theme of their absent children, when she suddenly exclaimed, "Oh, the air, how sweet it smells!" It is said that those words fell with leaden weight on Mompesson's

heart; but why he was so oppressed by them, is not stated. We can only conjecture that they revealed to him some secret of the plague, which long and intimate acquaintance with its workings had led him correctly to interpret. The fears the words aroused, were painfully realised in a few hours. She had indeed taken the plague; the worst symptoms were speedily shown, and before night no hope remained. She struggled till the 24th, and then died in the twenty-seventh year of her age.

We are told that those who were left at Eyam nearly forgot their own griefs and fears in sorrow for the death of Mrs. Mompesson, and in pity for her husband. Doubtless it was more as a legacy to his children, than as a document fitting their tender years, that Mompesson penned an affectionate letter to them concerning the loss of their mother; and at the same time he wrote to the patron of the living, Sir George Saville, clearly stating his expectation of his own immediate death.

About a mile east of Eyam, Riley-hill commands a lovely prospect; it is swept by the freshest breezes, and, being so far distant from Eyam, it might be thought would have escaped unscathed. How the plague was brought there, to the house of a family of Talbots, early in July, is not recorded. But a house still stands on the spot occupied by that in which these Talbots lived, and in the orchard belonging to it may be seen an old monument inscribed to the memories of Richard Talbot, Catherine his wife, two sons, and three daughters, buried July, 1666. There was but one other house then on the hill; it was occupied by a family named Hancock. If, as we suppose, the last burial at the Talbots was performed by the Hancocks, it is likely that the father and his son John gave their hands to the task, for we find the son John, and his sister Elizabeth, dying three days after the last grave of the Talbots was closed, and learn that they were buried by their unhappy mother. This seems to point at the serious illness of the father, whose death is, in fact, registered as occurring, four days later, on the 7th of August, with those of the two other sons living at home. Two more short days, and Alice died; one day more, and the wretched mother dug the grave of Ann, the last daughter. Between the 3rd and the 10th of August this poor woman lost her husband and five children, and buried them all with her own hand, side by side, a very little way from her own door. Fearing to touch the corpses, she tied to the feet of each, a towel, and so dragged the bodies in succession to their graves. The poor woman fled from her home to a surviving son at Sheffield, with whom she passed the sad remainder of her days. The graves are still there, with their memorial stones, placed by the surviving son.

Now there remained but a hundred and forty-nine persons in Eyam. September was unusually hot, and still the plague raged. A year had gone by since its first appearance in the village. The season for the wakes had come

again, and passed uncelebrated. Twenty-four died this month, of the one hundred and forty-nine. One of these was a little maid named Mary Darby, who died September 4th. She had lost her father by the plague on July 4th, and he was buried in the field in which their dwelling stood. Here she was gathering daisies from the grave when the pest seized her; on the following day she was laid under the daisies, by her father's side. Two stones with their respective names mark the spot. Margaret Blackwell, aged seventeen, had lost all her family by the plague except one brother, when she herself was attacked by it. Her brother was obliged to leave her in extremity in order to fetch coals, and before quitting the house cooked himself some bacon. He then went out, feeling assured that he would find her dead on his return. Margaret, suffering from excessive thirst, contrived to leave her bed to get something to drink, and, seeing in a basin the warm fat of the bacon which had so recently been fried, she hastily seized it, in the belief that it was water, and drank it off. Returning then to bed, she felt rather better, and, when her brother came back he found her, to his great surprise, revived. Eventually she recovered, and lived to a good old age to tell the story of the plague at Eyam.

There were no fresh cases after the 11th of October. The plague at last left Eyam, after a sojourn there of rather more than thirteen months. One of the fugitives, named Merrill, of Hollins House, Eyam, lived in a hut near the top of a hill called "Sir William," whither he had carried a cock to be his sole companion. He would often go to a certain point on the hill, from which he could overlook the fated village, and mark the number of graves increasing in the fields around. One day, at the time the plague ceased, his companion, the cock, after strutting about the heath for some time, rose from the ground, and, flapping his wings, flew straight away to his old quarters at Hollins House. Merrill waited a day or two, and then, interpreting the cock's desertion, by the story of Noah's bird, concluded that the plague, like the waters of the Deluge, had "abated." So he also descended to his old home, where he and the cock lived some years longer together.

WITHERED BLOSSOM.

IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

So long as Lucy lived, so long did her children in the nursery live glad and happy lives. Every evening before the six o'clock dinner, she ran up to the nursery, sat down on the little low blue chair—mamma's chair—and gathered the children around her. The three-year-old baby on her lap, the eldest little girl beside her, lost in admiration of the shining jewels on mamma's pretty hands. When the children grew up and had lost her, they could just remember the scene. The warm bright nursery, the gay childish pictures pinned

upon the walls, the nursery tea-table. And over and above all, beyond the bread and butter, beyond the white mugs, "A present from Bognor," "A present from the Isle of Wight," there rose up the mother. The pure sweet face, the low black dress, the pretty white neck with its shining white cross. Like a ministering angel she lived with them, helping and calming Belle, petting and hushing her baby Eunice. At length there came a time when mamma's pretty neck was always covered with a shawl, and the fingers that were so clever in mending all the toys, grew almost as helpless as those of little Belle. Then a shade upon the house, darkening blinds, the passionate unbelieving grief of the children, and a blank.

They grew up quick, fanciful, morbid. Quick, in their almost instinctive faculty for reading other people's thoughts and guessing at their motives. Fanciful, so that their caprices were endless, their likes and dislikes without number, and morbid to an extent that would have almost broken their poor mother's heart had she known it. For instance, the one lamp in the long ill-lighted street was opposite their house, and, of course, throughout the long dreary winters threw a weird sort of radiance on the puddles, and the children in the nursery would sob and cry, taking it as an omen of long, cheerless lives. They were imaginative children. Between every course there was played a story, when the silver fork Gabriel met his love Rosalie the spoon, at their rendezvous the mug. Every domino in the box had a name; every ball on the solitaire board; the hoops were princesses in disguise.

They were old-fashioned children in old-fashioned dress. They had curious long faces, with plaintive dissatisfied eyes, plaited hair tied at the sides with bows of brown ribbon, and voices alternately passionate and pettish.

So time led them from the nursery to the school-room.

Eunice and Belle had governess after governess, with whom they fought pitched battles and did very few lessons. Dreamy, obstinate, perverse, the children were most difficult to manage. They were quick at learning, with magnificent memories, which retained the smallest things with the clearness of a photograph; but they chose what they would learn, and it was very limited liability. They drew very well, and so worked hard at their drawing. They would sit for hours at the piano, com-

posing, and then singing, their songs. To a certain extent they were fond of their books—poetry, fiction, any touch of romance; no fact, nothing that had ever really happened, would they learn.

They were dreadful children to argue, requiring everything proved to them, and, unlike children, were hard and exacting; but there was a fascination about them in spite of it all.

Their loyalty to each other, which, when one incurred punishment, caused the other instantly to share it by committing the same fault; their love of the beautiful, amounting almost to a worship; their intolerance of slander; their dislike of gossip; their invariable siding with the weak; and, above all, their faithful clinging to their dead mother's memory; were very noticeable traits in them.

But they led wretched lives.

Their father did not choose, but accepted the first governesses that presented themselves. Gaunt, time-serving, ignorant women, who first bullied and then toadied the children; and on both these points the little judges were merciless.

Eunice and Belle behaved as if they were devoid of all conscience or feeling. They delighted in nothing so much as exasperating their governess until she lost her temper, and then keeping their own: studiously every day giving as much trouble as possible, and overwhelming themselves with self-reproach at night.

Lessons over, they would spend long hours in composing anthems, and sketching plain faces with plenty of character. Their greatest pleasure was analysing themselves, and it was very bad for them. They treated their sense of the ludicrous to a representation of their own peculiarities, and so greatly encouraged both, becoming each day more hopelessly self-concentrated.

So they passed into womanhood, and the years wrought marvels.

Their appearance was now very good. Their figures were magnificent, and their faces, though still peculiar, very handsome; with complexions of a cream white, capable of dark flushing, and eyes long and dreamy. They were immensely admired for their good looks, quaintness, and the fascination that had grown with them.

It is here my story begins.

I first made their acquaintance in a large old country house down in Devonshire, where we were all staying. They arrived late one afternoon in dark travelling cloaks, and veils on their hats, so that I did not see them till they entered the long low

drawing-room dressed for dinner. Then, the simplicity of their white untrimmed muslins particularly pleased me. Judging them from it, I held them to be quiet, simple girls: though I have no doubt now, they were perfectly aware that their pliant figures, cream-tinted faces, and dark coiled hair, were so shown off to advantage.

The girls took to me directly, and so far as I could see, to no one else. Originally, I suppose, they were attracted to me by pity, seeing me an invalid, middle aged, and plain. But afterwards I fancy they liked dropping down on the floor, and telling me all that went on in that large house.

They had just returned from Paris, I found; indeed, they seemed to travel continually.

The fact was, they were so quick in foreseeing the effect of their words and actions, that though by no means naturally sociable, they had made a large quantity, not perhaps of true steady-going friends, but desirable acquaintances—I use the word from their point of view—who took them to Paris, gave them a London season, or, as in this instance, brought them to spend the autumn in their country house. They much preferred, I fancy, being together, but for all that, they not unfrequently separated, one going east, while the other went west. Besides their two faces, there was one other face at our pleasant dining-table in which I took an interest. It belonged to a Captain Frogmore: a large, healthy-looking man, with a loud voice, who was home on sick leave, he told us, and who roared when we doubted the sickness. He admired the simple muslin dresses to the full as much as I did, and, in his heavy way, danced a devoted attendance on them. The girls were so alike both in appearance and character, that I scarcely wondered he should distribute his attentions equally, even to the extent of seeming indifferent as to which he should ultimately make Mrs. Frogmore.

I was not uneasy about it, for Eunice and Belle were not responsive, taking his admiration simply, as a matter of course, very much as if they were princesses of the blood, clearly showing, however, that they liked it, and would have been displeased had it been withdrawn.

But it was not possible that for very long Captain Frogmore should go on showing no preference; the girls themselves helped him to a decision. His attentions increasing, they began to bore Belle, while Eunice still *took them in good part*. This being the *case*, Captain Frogmore's attentions rapidly

ran in one direction, so that while Eunice had less and less time to set aside from flirtation, Belle's whole day was now at her own disposal, and so I saw more of her.

I think of the two I liked Eunice the better, not from any special good point in her, but negatively, because she was perhaps just a shade less morbid, non-practical, self-concentrated than her sister; but despite myself there was every little while some look in Belle's eyes that banished the headstrong, self-opiniated girl, and conjured up before me the nursery picture they were so fond of describing. I saw as in some old dream the dead mother alive, the children around her, and this girl Belle, innocently happy, with an untrodden life stretching before her; and the rush of love to my heart, arose from sheer pity. Knowing her, how could I even hope that her life would be smooth?

For, so far as I understood it, their story ran thus. Their father, never a very virtuous character, was now rapidly drinking himself into his grave, and the girls, at his death, would have nothing—from him, that is. An old maiden aunt had bequeathed a small fortune to Eunice as her god-daughter, completely passing over poor Belle. Eunice would have liked nothing better than to share it; but no talking, no arguments, could bring this to pass; Belle always returned the same answer. She would accept her life from no one, not even her sister. When, therefore, their present income should cease, Eunice might do what she would with her money; Belle was going out as a governess. I believed her implicitly. To be obstinate came as naturally to Belle as yielding might come to another. The idea haunted me. That original little governess! I saw her in the school-room teaching commonplace children the exact things *she* had liked, bewildered at dulness, getting morbid and distressed. I saw her in the drawing-room pale and unhappy, not courting, but repelling attention with proud eyes and an unconciliating voice; defiance even in the erectness of her attitude. I confessed to myself sadly that I could not see the end. Marriage would have solved the difficulty, but after a certain time every one she knew bored Belle, and, under these circumstances, marriage might have been dangerous. Just now, however, the days were passing pleasantly, and on the unquiet sea of their troubled lives the girls were resting on their oars, when there came a change that broke it all up. Shall I ever forget that evening?

The gentlemen were out on the verandah, away down the garden, or on the far-off

terrace, smoking their cigars, the red light showing prettily in the distance; we ladies were amusing ourselves in their absence.

Our hostess and another lady were matching wools by lamplight; but the glare hurt my eyes, and my couch was wheeled to the far window. There the moonlight coming in showed Eunice dreamily playing a sad old German waltz, and Belle on the ottoman beside me, discussing a drawing.

A grey stone wall, the height of the picture, and the insects in the crevices, brown and very hideous, were really beautifully done, and some so minute as almost to require a microscope.

It was very clever, and I told her so; but I thought the subject unfortunate, and it was this she was contesting. She was so vehement that I grew tired of her, and began to listen to the voices at the centre table. My hostess was saying,

"I am expecting a visitor to arrive to-night. He should be almost here now, I think——"

"Mr. Curzon," said the servant, as Mr. Curzon, passing him, walked into the room. A remarkably slight man, fair-haired, with cold blue eyes, and a good carriage.

This I saw on the instant, and also that Belle had started from her seat, with her breath coming quickly in little gasps.

"What, Jack! You know Belle?" cries our hostess, surprised at her manner.

"Yes; I know Miss Belle," says Jack, tenderly, and he took her hand and held it.

And then there was a pause, which I felt by instinct Belle could never break.

Our hostess comes to the rescue.

"Well, Jack, manners. Do not you know Eunice?"

Jack turns and bows towards the piano.

"No; I have not that pleasure. You must introduce me."

We chat and talk through the evening. Belle has met this Mr. Curzon away on some visit, and they seem to be pretty well acquainted.

When we make a move for bed, and come towards the light, Belle is crimson with excitement, and there is enchantment in her eyes. The hand that takes up the bedroom lamp trembles; and do what she will, her lips quiver. Some of the gentlemen coming in now, our hostess gives them Curzon in charge.

"Good-night, gentlemen!" she says, cheerily. "You may take back another recruit to your smoking."

Most of them are off to the billiard-room, and have had enough of smoking; but not Frogmore. *This last feature is never ap-*

parent in Frogmore. Curzon and he go off together. The verandah, where they smoke, is under my bedroom, and their words come up to me through the open window.

They are talking of the girls, their quaintness and beauty. Frogmore is descanting on Eunice's generosity.

"She would have shared it all. Generous of her, wasn't it?"

"Charming," Curzon says, but his tone is careless, as though he were not attending. Presently, their talk grew more private; I shut the window and retired.

The next morning, on going down-stairs, I found the whole party assembled in the breakfast-room, our pleasure-loving hostess gaily planning out the day. We were to take our dinner to an old ruin that we knew; and we were all to put on our oldest clothes. I laughed with the girls about their oldest clothes; they who were always so daintily fresh!

We drove on the side of the cliff, and the view the whole way was like one of Hook's pictures. Sharp, jagged rocks in a green sea; white, foaming waves coming crashing against them. The crispness upon everything was a sort of champagne to us.

Eunice and Frogmore were in the rumble of one carriage; Curzon and Belle were in the rumble of the other. Our hostess, I saw, thought she had arranged us all cleverly.

I was in the carriage whose rumble held Belle, and I noticed how the old dreaminess had vanished from her eyes, and how contented and happy they looked.

Every now and then I caught her fresh voice, but oftener she spoke in a whisper. Whenever I turned, I saw her face changing, and there seemed to be no limit to her companion's admiration. I fully believed I was spectator at a love-scene, and when we reached the ruins, I let them ramble off together. Very soon the whole party was scattered, and as I sat on the rocks on the shelving beach, the prettiest visions began to float towards me. My eyes saw everything couleur de rose; the far-off future grew fair and bright; vaguely, what I wished seemed coming to pass. It was the old thing after all, that I wished; the realisation of the old jingling rhyme,

Jack shall have Jill,
Nought shall go ill.

"Mrs. F.," said Frogmore, coming up towards me, "I don't care for the ruins. May I sit on these rocks and have a talk with you?"

"As you like, Captain Frogmore," said I. But there was nothing in my manner that encouraged him, for we sat on our re-

spective rocks in utter silence. At last he said in his abrupt matter-of-fact way :

"You see a good deal of those girls, Mrs. F., and know all their ways. Eunice, for instance. I want her to marry me: now, before I ask her, do you think I have much chance?"

I was not surprised, but I was very, very glad, and my answer was ready. I recalled a thousand instances where Eunice had seemed to flush at his approach, and where her shafts of ridicule had passed by his name.

"I do think so, Captain Frogmore," said I, and then the whole world grew bright for him too. The visions that had been only for my eyes, floated and danced before him. There were little pools of green water all around us, and I knew how lovely were the pictures he saw shadowed forth in their depths. The dust on the air was pure gold, and it went blinding into his eyes, and settling round his heart.

"Faith, Love, and Trust," sang the birds, and woke up the echoes in the place. Ah me, it is but touch and go with visions! Suddenly, with a rush they were all gone, and in their stead was Eunice, pouting her lips, and making objections to everything.

"Take our dinner on the rocks! But that will be very horrid, Captain Frogmore. No, I don't at all know how we're going home. One can't settle everything in a moment."

Then the others came up, Curzon looking very quiet and gentlemanly in his sea-side get-up, with the white gauze veil round his hat, readjusted, I saw, by feminine fingers, and Belle, handsomer than I had ever seen her, with a warm dark flush on her face, and clematis in her jacket.

"Dear Mrs. F.," she said, sinking down beside me, "what a day! Mrs. F., I should like this to last always."

Yes, it was Belle who said that—the would-be instructress of extreme youth. The incompatibility of the whole thing began to press upon me. We had the brightest little picnic imaginable. The girls sang to us. Gay little songs, made up of their own words to their own music, but with strange, ringing changes that stirred my heart to its depths.

"Sit still, Belle," said Eunice, "and I will draw you. You have fallen into a good position; the sun is on your flowers. How I wish I had colours here!"

"Challenged!" said Curzon. "I will draw your sister."

They both set to work, but Curzon got on slowly, from looking too much at the model.

When the sketches were done, Eunice's was very much the better, but Curzon had caught the dreamy wistful look in Belle's eyes.

"You have done it before!" cried Eunice. "Belle's face is very difficult to draw. I was months before I could do it."

Curzon did not answer her.

"Jack is so clever," said our hostess aside to me; she was pleased at the success of her day, and her kind-hearted plans. "He can do everything, and he is so lovable."

Somehow, in spite of the way they had come, going home the young ones managed a different arrangement. Eunice was in her seat somewhat before the others, and I myself saw Curzon go up to her, and heard him say: "Won't you let me go back with you? Do!"

Eunice smiled assent, there was perhaps nothing else left her to do; but Frogmore looked supremely disgusted, as he took up his seat by Belle. They looked so dissatisfied and cross, sitting there side by side, that I could not make up my mind to spoil my drive by going with them, and I took refuge with Eunice.

It certainly was as our hostess had said. Jack was very clever. I had not noticed it so much when he had been with Belle. Eunice was flattered by this new division of forces and Mr. Curzon's unexpected attention. She did not, perhaps, observe, as I did, that no matter how he talked, or to whom he talked, his glances went straight through the gathering gloom over to Belle.

"Well, we have had a delightful day," said Eunice at length, when we alighted; "have we not, Belle?"

But Belle had gone stone deaf with one ear, and that was the ear nearest her sister.

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BOOK III.

CHAPTER XI. NIGHT AND MORNING.

BOTH Lord and Lady Hetherington were in the dining-room when Joyce entered, the former with his brown velvet suit splashed and clay-stained, and his thick boots rich with the spoil of many a furrow (he was bitten with a farming and agricultural mania just then), and the latter calm and collected as Walter ever remembered her. She received the visitor with perfect politeness, expressed in a few well-chosen sentences her pleasure at seeing him again, and the satisfaction with which she had learned of his improved position; then, after scanning him with rather a searching glance, she turned to the footman, and asked where was Lady Caroline, and whether she knew luncheon was ready. Joyce replied for the man. Lady Caroline had heard the announcement of luncheon, but had asked him to come in by himself, saying she would follow directly. Her ladyship had gone up to her room, the footman added; he did not think her ladyship was very well. The footman was new to Westhope, or he would have known that the domestics of that establishment were never allowed to think, or at least were expected to keep their thoughts to themselves. Lady Hetherington of course ignored the footman's remark entirely, but addressed herself to Joyce.

"I hope you did not bring down any ill news for Lady Caroline, Mr. Joyce?"

"Not I, indeed, Lady Hetherington. I merely came to ask her ladyship's advice on—well, on a matter of business."

"In which she was interested?"

"No, indeed! I was selfish enough to

lay before her a matter in which my own interests were alone concerned."

"Ah!" said Lady Hetherington, with a sigh of relief, "I was afraid it might be some business in which she would have to involve herself for other people, and really she is such an extraordinary woman, constituting herself chaperon to two young women who may be very well in their way, I dare say, but whom nobody ever heard of, and doing such odd things, but—however, that's all right."

Her ladyship subsiding, his lordship here had a chance of expressing his delight at his ex-secretary's advancement, which he did warmly, but in his own peculiar way. So Joyce had gone into Parliament; right, quite right, but wrong side, hey, hey? Radicals and those sort of fellows, hey? Republic and that sort of thing! Like all young men, make mistakes, hey, but know better soon, and come round. Live to see him in the Carlton yet. Knew where he picked up those atrocious doctrines—didn't mind his calling them atrocious, hey, hey?—from Byrne; strange man, clever man, deuced clever, well read, and all that kind of thing, but desperate free-thinker. This-tlewood, Wolfe Tone, and that kind of thing. Never live to see him in the Carlton. No, of course not; not the place for him. Recollect the Chronicles? Ah, of course; deuced interestin', all that stuff that—that I wrote then, wasn't it? Had not made much progress since. So taken up with farmin' and that kind of thing; must take him into the park before he left, and show him some alterations just going to be made, which would be an immense improvement, immense imp—Oh, here was Lady Caroline!"

What did that idiotic footman mean by saying he thought Lady Caroline was not

well? She came in looking radiant, and took her seat at the table with all her usual composure. Lady Hetherington looked at her in surprise, and said, "Anything the matter, Caroline?"

"The matter, Margaret! Nothing in the world. Why?"

"You told Mr. Joyce to come in to luncheon without you, and Thomas said you had gone up-stairs. I feared you had one of your faint attacks!"

"Thanks for your sympathy! No! I knew Mr. Joyce would be leaving almost directly after luncheon, and I had a letter to write which I want him to be good enough to take to town for me. So I seized the only chance I had, and ran off to write it."

"Deuced odd that!" said Lord Hetherington; "here's British post-office, greatest institution in the country. Rowland Hill, and that kind of thing; take your letters everywhere for a penny—penny, by Jove, and yet you'll always find women want fellows to make postmen of themselves, and carry their letters themselves."

"This is a special letter, West," said Lady Caroline. "You don't understand!"

"Oh yes, I do," said his lordship with a chuckle; "women's letters all special letters, hey, hey? order to the haberdasher for a yard of ribbon, line to Mitchell's for stalls at the play; all special, hey, Mr. Joyce, hey?"

When luncheon was over Joyce imagined that Lady Caroline would return with him to the library, and renew their conversation. He was accordingly much surprised, when she suggested to Lord Hetherington that he should show Mr. Joyce the alterations which were about to be made in the park. His lordship was only too glad to be mounted on his hobby, and away they went, not returning until it was time for Joyce to start for the station. He did not see Lady Hetherington again, but his lordship, in great delight at the manner in which his agricultural discourse had been listened to was very warm in his adieux, and expressed his hope that they would meet in town. "Politics always laid aside at the dinner-table, Mr. Joyce, hey, hey?" and Lady Caroline, after bidding him farewell, placed a note in his hand, saying "This was the letter I spoke of!" He glanced at it and saw it was addressed to himself, and the next instant the carriage started. Addressed to himself! Did she not say at luncheon that she had been writing a note which she wanted him to take to town

for her, and yet there was the address, Walter Joyce, Esq., in her bold firm hand. There must be an enclosure which he was to deliver or to post! And then he did what he might have done at first—broke open the seal of the envelope and took out the contents. One sheet of note paper, with these words:

"I think you will be doing rightly in acting as you propose. Miss Creswell is handsome, clever, and exceptionally 'thorough.' From what I have seen of her I should think she would make you an excellent helpmate, and you know I should not say this were I not tolerably certain about it. I may not see you again for a few weeks, as I detest this specially cold spring, and shall probably run away to Torquay, or perhaps even to Nice, but letters to Chesterfield-street will always find me, and I shall always have the warmest and deepest interest in your welfare. Good-bye. C. M."

"She is a woman of extraordinary mental, calibre," said Joyce to himself, as he refolded the note and placed it in his pocket. "She grasps a subject immediately, thinks it through at once, and writes an unmistakable opinion in a few terse lines. A wonderful woman! I've no doubt she had made up her mind, and had written that note before she came down to luncheon, though she did not give it to me until just now."

Walter Joyce was wrong. The interval between leaving him and her arrival in the dining-room had been passed by Lady Caroline on her bed, where she fell, prone, as the door closed behind her. She lay there, her face buried in the pillow, her hands tightly clasped behind her head, her hair escaped from its knot, and creeping down her back, her heart beating wildly. Ah, what minutes of agony and humiliation, of disappointment and self-contempt! It had come upon her very suddenly, and had found her unprepared. She had never dared to analyse her feeling for Joyce; knew of its existence, but did not know, or would not admit to herself, what it was. Tried to persuade herself that it was "interest" in him; but laughed contemptuously at the poor deceit when she found her heart beating double pace as she read of his progress at the election, or her cheek flaming and her lip quivering as she did battle against Lady Hetherington's occasional impertinences about him. Those were the signs of something more than interest—of love,

real, unmistakable passion. What a future might it not have been for her? She had respected her first husband for his kindness, his confidence, his equable temper. She would have respected this man too, respected him for his talent, his bravery, the skill and courage with which he had fought the great battle of life, but she would have loved him too—loved him with that wild passion, with that deep devotion. For the first time in her life she had learned what it was to love, and learned it too late. On those few occasions when she had dared to reveal to herself what was hidden in the inmost recesses of her soul, she had come to the conclusion that though the happiness for which she pined would never be realised, and she never concealed from herself the improbability of that, yet she should always hold the first position in his thoughts. The bitter disappointment which he had suffered at Miss Ashurst's hands had, she thought, effectually extinguished all idea of marriage in his mind. And now he came to her, to her of all women in the world, to tell her of his loneliness, his want of some one to sympathise with and be his companion, and to ask her advice as regarded his selection of Maud Creswell! It was too hard upon her, too much for her to bear this. A score of schemes flashed through her brain. Suppose she were to temporise with this question? A word from her would make Joyce defer taking any steps in the matter for the present, and in the interval she could easily let him see how she—Ah, the shame, the wretched humiliation! Was she bewitched, or was she in sober seriousness, she, Caroline Mansergh, whose pride as Caroline West was a byword, was she going to throw herself at the head of a man who had not only never shown any intention of proposing to her, but had actually come to consult her about his marriage with another woman! It was impossible. Noblesse oblige. Lady Caroline West's pride, dormant and overlaid with other passions, yet lived in Lady Caroline Mansergh, and asserted itself in time. She rose from the bed, bathed her face, adjusted her hair, poured some sal-volatile in a glass with a shaking hand, and swallowed it through her set teeth, then went down to luncheon, as we have seen. She expressly avoided any chance of future conversation with Walter, and the note was written while he was out with Lord Hetherington.

Of course, Walter Joyce was utterly ignorant of Lady Caroline's feelings. As she hid them from herself as much as pos-

sible, it was unlikely that she would suffer him to catch the smallest inkling of them; and it is very questionable whether, had his powers of divination been infinitely stronger than they were, he would have understood them. The one spark of romance with which nature had endowed him had been completely stamped out by Marian Ashurst, and the rest of his organisation was commonplace naturally, and made more commonplace by practical experience of the world. He wondered Lady Caroline had not arranged to have a further talk with him. She had left him, or rather they had been interrupted just at the critical moment, just when he had told her the object of his visit; and it was odd, to say the least of it, that she did not seek an early opportunity for letting him know her opinion on the really weighty question on which he had consulted her. And yet she always knew best; no doubt she thought it was essential that he should please Lord Hetherington, who was evidently bent on showing him those alterations, and, perhaps, she thought, too, that he might like to have her answer in writing to refer to on occasion. What a capital answer it was! He pulled it out of his pocket, and looked at it again, so clear and concise and positive. An excellent helpmate. Yes, that was what he wanted. How exactly she appreciated him! Running to Torquay or Nice? What a funny thing! He had never heard her complain of being affected by the cold before, and—however she approved of his intentions in regard to Maud Creswell, that was the great point. So ruminated Walter Joyce, the hard-headed and practical, sliding gradually into a hundred other thoughts of work to be done and schemes to be looked into, and people to be seen, with which he was so much engaged that, until he reached London, both Maud and Lady Caroline were fairly obliterated from his mind.

He slept at his chambers that night, and went down to Helmingham the next day. There was a station now at the village, and it was here that Joyce alighted, not merely because it was more convenient than going to Brocksopp, but because it saved him the annoyance of having to run the gauntlet of a walk through the midst of his constituency, every other member of which had a complaint to make or a petition to prefer. The Helmingham people, of course, were immensely impressed by the sight of a man who, originally known to them as pursuing the mysterious profession of a Schoolmas-

ter, had grown into that yet more inscrutable being a Member of Parliament; but their wonderment was simply expressed in gaping and staring. They kept their distance peasant-like, and never dreamed of button-holing their member, as did the Brocksoppians. The road that led from the station to the village skirted the wall of the school-garden. It was a low wall, and, looking over it, Joyce saw Maud Creswell tying up a creeper which was trained round the study window. Her attitude was pretty, a sunbeam shone on her hatless head, and the exertion given to her task had brought a bright colour to her usually pale face. Never before had she looked so attractive in Joyce's eyes. He dismissed from his mind the interesting question of compulsory education for factory children, which he had been revolving therein for the last hour and a half, and quickened his pace towards the house.

Maud was in the study when he entered. The flush had left her face, but returned when she saw him. He advanced and took her hand.

"So soon back!" she cried. "When I came down yesterday, they told me you had gone to town, and probably would not return; and I was so horribly vexed!"

"Were you? That's kind of you, indeed!"

"Well you know—I mean——"

"What you say. I believe that firmly, for you have the credit of being quite unconventional. No, I merely went to London on business, and, that finished, I returned at once. Where is your sister?"

"Out."

"And her husband?"

"How can you ask such a question? With her, of course. They have gone to pay a visit."

"A visit; where? I, I beg your pardon, how very rude of me to ask such a question! What a tell-tale face you have, Miss Creswell. I saw the rudeness I had committed by your expression."

"You give me credit for more power than I possess. There was no rudeness in your asking. They have gone to Woolgreaves."

"To Woolgreaves!"

"Yes. Mrs. Creswell called here two days ago, the day you went to London, but Gertrude and George were out, so she left a note stating she was very anxious to see them, and they have gone over there to-day. They had no notion you would have come down, or they would not have gone. *I am so sorry they're not here.*"

"I confess I am not."

"Not sorry! That's not polite. Why are you not sorry?"

"Because I wanted to talk to you."

"To me?"

"Yes, to you. I've something to consult you about, in relation to my recent visit to town, rather a difficult matter, but I have all faith in your good judgment."

"I'm afraid you rate my judgment too highly, Mr. Joyce; but at all events you may be assured of my answering you honestly, and to the best of my power."

"That is all I ask. That granted, I can make sure of the rest. And really it is not such a great matter after all. Only a little advice, but such advice as only a woman, more than that, only a peculiar kind of woman, can give."

"Do I fulfil the requirements?"

"Exactly."

"Then proceed at once. And I will promise to answer exactly as I think."

"Well, then, I have a friend, about my own age, of sufficiently mean birth, whose father was a man of restricted views and small mind, both cramped and narrowed by the doctrines of the religious sect to which he belonged, but whose mother was an angel. Unfortunately the mother died too soon after the boy's birth to be of much good to him, beyond leaving him the recollection of her sweet face and voice and influence; a recollection which he cherishes to this day. After his wife's death the boy's father became more and more imbued with the sectarian doctrines, an undue observance of which had already had its effect in his home, and, dying shortly after, left his son almost unprovided for, and friendless, save in such friendship as the lad might have made for himself. This, however, proved sufficient. The master of the school at which the lad attended took great interest in him, half adopted him as it were, and when the youth was old enough, took him as his assistant in the school. This would have met my friend's views sufficiently, for he was a plodding hardworking fellow, had he had no other motive; but he had another: he was in love with the schoolmaster's daughter, and she returned his passion. Am I wearying you with this rigmarole?"

"You know you are not. Please go on!"

"So they proceeded in their Arcadian simplicity, until the schoolmaster died, leaving his wife and daughter unprovided for, and my friend had to go out into the world to seek his fortune—to seek his

bread rather, I should say! bread, to be shared, as soon as he had found enough of it, with his betrothed. But while he was floundering away, throwing out a grappling-iron here and there, striving to attach himself to something where bread was to be earned, the young lady had a slice of cake offered to her, and, as she had always preferred cake to bread, she accepted it at once, and thought no more of the man who was hunting so eagerly for penny rolls for her sake. You follow me?"

"Yes, yes! Pray go on!"

"Well, I'm nearly at the end of my story! When my friend found that the only person in the world who was dear to him had treated him so basely, he thought he should die, and he said he should, but he didn't. He suffered frightfully; he never attempts to deny that; thought there was an end of all things for him; that life was henceforth a blank, and all that sort of thing, for which see the circulating library. But he recovered; he threw himself into the penny-roll hunting with greater vigour than ever, and he succeeded wonderfully. For a time, whenever his thoughts turned towards the woman who had treated him so shamefully, had jilted him so heartlessly, he was full of anger and hopes for revenge, but that period passed away, and the desire to improve his position, and to make progress in the work which he had undertaken, occupied all his attention. Then he found that this was not sufficient; that his heart yearned for some one to love, for some one to be loved by, and he found that some one, but he did not ask her to become his wife!"

"He did not. Why not?"

"Because he was afraid her mind might have been poisoned by some warped story of his former engagement, some——"

"Could he swear to her that his story, as you have told it to me, is true?"

"He could, and he would!"

"Then she would not be worthy of his love if she refused to believe him!"

"Ah, Maud, dearest and best, is there any need to involve the story further; have you not known its meaning from the outset? Heart-whole and intact, I offer you my hand, and swear to do my best to make the rest of our lives happy if you take it. You don't answer. Ah, I don't want you to. Thanks, dear, a thousand times, for giving me a new, fresh, worthy interest in life!"

"You here, Mr. Joyce? Why, when did you get back?"

"Half an hour since, Gertrude. You did not expect me, I hear!"

"Certainly not, or we shouldn't have gone out. And we did no good after all."

"No good? How do you mean?"

"Oh, madam was out. However, bother madam. Did you see Lady Caroline?"

"I did."

"And did you settle about Maud's staying with us?"

"No."

"Nor about her going to her ladyship's?"

"No."

"Why, what on earth was the use of your going to town? What have you settled?"

"That she's to stay with—me."

"With you?"

"With me."

"Why, you don't mean to say that you're going—that she's going——?"

"I do, exactly that."

"Oh, you dear Walter! I am so delighted! Here, George! What did I say about those three crows we saw as we were driving in the pony chaise? They did mean a wedding, after all!"

UNDER THE CHANNEL.

PERHAPS there is no journey so well known to so many people as the water journey that has to be made in passing between England and France. Perhaps there is none which, with a fair reference to its length, excites such strong feelings of repugnance in so many travellers. It is wonderful that the many inconveniences attendant on the passage across the British Channel should have been so long and so patiently borne. Rich and poor, sea-sick and sound, dukes and Cook's excursionists, pleasure-seekers and men of business, no matter; the same brush is prepared for their general tarring. To the complexion of being made thoroughly wretched for a certain (or uncertain) number of hours, must we all come, who wish now and again to improve our minds or estates by foreign travel.

Consider the arrival of the train from Paris, facetiously termed of *grande vitesse*, at the Railway Terminus at Boulogne, on a wet night when there is a nice breeze blowing. It is not comfortable, that omnibus drive to the boat which has to be achieved after you have extricated yourself from the railway carriage of the Chemin de Fer du Nord. To slide and stagger down a wet and slippery ladder with the rain beating in your face, and the wind madly striving to get rid of your hat, is not pleasant. To dispose safely and satisfactorily of the small articles of luggage which it is necessary to carry in the hand, is troublesome. It is a sorry

business to watch your pet boxes, marked, it may be, "with care," forming part of an avalanche of luggage crashing down a wooden slide on to the wet deck. But these are minor difficulties, and may occur under many other circumstances. It is when the boat clears the pier-head and takes that first convulsive leap at the bar, like a buck-jumping horse at an unexpected hurdle, that you may look for the commencement of your real troubles. You, Mr. Reader, are travelling with Mr. Writer and Mr. Friend. It has long been notorious to Mr. Writer's family and friends that he has a gift of becoming sea-sick on the shortest provocation. It accordingly affords you no surprise to find your friend diving hurriedly into the cabin, obviously surrendering himself to his fate. But, if it so happen that you are strange to the boats appropriated to the service of the South-Eastern Railway, it will surprise you to see him very shortly tumble up-stairs again with horror depicted on his pale face; and you will be astonished to see him cast himself down in the rain by the side of Mr. Friend, who, equally sea-sick but more knowing, has not attempted the cabin. A sniff—one sniff will prove the fact—down the cabin stairs, will explain all. The Black Hole of Calcutta would have had few terrors for an acclimatised steward of a Channel boat. Perhaps, being yourself a good sailor, you are prepared to enjoy the passage? No expectation could be more fallacious! The narrow boat, built for speed alone, is driven through, not over, the tumbling, chopping waves of the Channel; and takes whole seas aboard at every pitch and roll. Add the driving spray, and from being wet through there is no escape. The cabin is already crammed with victims, too miserably ill to be conscious of the villanous atmosphere they breathe, and there would be no getting into it even if you wished. You must stay on deck exposed to the tender mercies of the weather. In all directions are ladies, prone and prostrate, vainly endeavouring to protect themselves with shawls, or rugs, or oilskin garments, lent (for a consideration) by the crew, who drive a brisk and profitable trade in such articles. Clothes are spoilt, tempers suffer, and a dripping and moody band emerge on the Folkestone pier. The two hours' railway journey up to town, with salt water sticky in your hair, stiffening your clothes, and running out at the cuffs of your many coats; with evil suggestions of stale cabin pervading your fellow-travellers; and somebody in a middle seat becoming retrospectively ill on peppermint drops, and plunging at the window, is a weariness to the flesh. The excellent general arrangements and the marvellous punctuality of the run between Paris and London, stand a great chance of being forgotten in the remembrance of the horrors and discomforts of the middle passage.

In dry weather it is not so bad; but, even in dry weather, if there be any sea on (and the *vexed waters* of the Channel, like the course of true love, rarely run smooth) to remain on

deck is to be drenched with spray, while to go below is as repugnant to the mind of any one with even rudimentary ideas of cleanliness and ventilation, in dry weather as in wet. It is amazing that while the land service improves so much and so steadily (a little more liberality in some of the train arrangements on the French side, being now almost all that can be asked for), the sea arrangements should remain absolutely barbarous. Except in the matters, important enough no doubt, of speed and safety, the Channel steamboats are as far behind the age, and the requirements of the service on which they are employed, as if they were so many Margate hoys.

In a greater or less degree the Boulogne and Folkestone passage is representative of all, with one strong point in its favour. It is the shortest.

It would seem, on the face of the case, that the remedy for this disagreeable state of things is simple. The employment of larger and more commodious steamers seems the first thing to ask for. Unfortunately, the greater number of the Channel harbours on either side, are not suited for the reception of very large vessels; and, to combine comfort with the high rate of speed which the travelling public has learned to insist upon, steamers of considerable size would be necessary. This consideration would shelve the whole question with many people. They would be satisfied to go on with the existing system, however wretched, comforting themselves with the reflection that there is no help for it, and that people whose business or pleasure leads them across the Channel, must make the best of what they can get there.

But there is another and an important point to be considered: a point which, as it touches the pocket, is likely to receive very respectful attention from two great commercial countries. Business men have long complained sadly of the great cost attaching to the rapid carriage of goods between Franco and England, owing to the heavy extra expenses attendant on transhipment. Experienced heads have been laid together, to endeavour to devise some scheme by which a continuous railway service between London and Paris might be secured. As in most cases where some great change is involved, or where some strikingly novel application of the arts of the engineer is required, the general public has smiled rather contemptuously on the suggestions made, and has looked upon some of the schemes proposed as purely visionary. But those whose business it has been to discuss the question practically, and who are well aware of the vast amount of money that is yearly lost, not only in shipping charges, but in actual damage to goods in the various loadings and unloadings to which they are subjected, are convinced that the time has arrived when this important question must be seriously taken in hand. Moreover: the passenger traffic alone shows an increase sufficiently great to warrant considerable improvements, even of a costly nature. It is, and has

been for some years, steadily increasing at the rate of ten per cent per annum.

Three plans have been proposed to effect the desired object.

The first, which naturally grows out of the instinctive cry for larger steamers, can scarcely be called a plan for a continuous railway. It is proposed to employ very large steam-vessels of a peculiar build, on to which the trains shall be run bodily. The ferry vessel will then steam across to the opposite side, where the train will be run off it and on to the shore line. All trouble and discomfort attendant even on a change of carriage will be avoided. A truck may be loaded in London and, untouched by the way, be unloaded in Paris.

At first sight this seems a sufficiently ingenious plan. Mr. Scott Russell has clearly demonstrated its practicability on a considerable scale, by the example of the Lake of Constance: across whose occasionally stormy waters heavy trains have been successfully ferried daily for some months.

But, unfortunately, the running of the trains on to the steam-vessels, the running of them off again, the lashings on the one side and the casting loose on the other, must occupy a considerable time. And the question of time is one that in this matter must be steadily kept in view. Again, this plan does not get rid of the Channel, and it may reasonably be argued that the difficulties arising from tempest, fog, or other delay and danger-bringing causes, would be incomparably greater in the Channel than on the Boden See. After all, then, the ferry plan, though in many respects a good remedy, is a partial one only: while the expense of constructing harbours of sufficient magnitude, and of building steamers fitted for the great strain they would be called upon to bear, would be very large.

Is it possible to construct a really continuous railway between France and England? And is it possible to do the work at a cost admitting of a remunerative profit? These are the two questions to which it is of importance to obtain satisfactory replies.

An eminent French engineer proposed some years ago a magnificent scheme for the construction of no less a work than a railway bridge across the Straits of Dover. Ingenious calculations, elaborate plans, and highly-coloured drawings, have not been wanting to attract public attention to this scheme. Royal personages are reported to have looked upon it with favour. It received close and careful attention from experts and others interested in the matter. But, however pleasant the prospect of being able to cross the Channel with no break of gauge, with no apprehension of sea-sickness, and with no burrowing or tunnelling in the dark, the plan developed formidable difficulties when it came to be practically examined; the closer the criticism, the more serious and obvious the objections. In the first place the engineering difficulties were found to be of a most startling description. For

the purposes of the ordinary navigation, such a bridge must be at least two hundred feet above high-water mark. The piers, which would have to be carried up some four hundred feet, would require to be strong enough to withstand, not only the weight and vibration of the traffic, but the violence of the most furious winter storms. In addition to these piers (in themselves a serious addition to the difficulties of a navigation already sufficiently overcrowded and hazardous), the engineer proposed the construction in mid-channel of an island and port of refuge: the existence of which, in such a situation, would probably have proved a fruitful source of trouble and danger to passing vessels. Apart from these considerations, the question of cost, by no means to be lost sight of even in the consideration of magnificent proposals such as this, was found to be decidedly against the adoption of the plan, or any modification of it. Piers four hundred feet high, artificial islands, harbours of refuge out at sea, and divers works on a similarly grand scale, are not to be constructed for nothing: especially, when the distance to be spanned is some four-and-twenty miles. Even supposing the engineering difficulties to be surmounted—and with the wonderful examples we have before us, it seems difficult to believe that there is practically any limit to engineering achievements—then it became a question whether the over-channel railway bridge could ever be successful, commercially. The estimated cost of such a bridge was some fifty millions sterling: so hopeless a sum that the plan was speedily relegated to the limbo of abortive projects.

If you have to cross the sea in a railway carriage, and can neither cross on the water in a ferry vessel, nor over the water on a bridge, the only remaining way lies either in the water, or under the water.

To cross *in* the water would necessitate the sinking of a tube or tubes. Of that operation the practicability is, to say the least, doubtful. Even when you had got your tube to the bottom of the sea, its troubles would only begin. It would always be liable to external injury; and it would be next to impossible to protect it from continual leakage. Continual leakage would in no long time prove fatal to its usefulness, and, finally, to its existence.

What, then, about passing under the water? What, in a word, about tunnelling below the bed of the Channel from coast to coast?

The conditions on which the success of such an enterprise depend, are comparatively few and simple. The first condition relates to the geological formation in which the work would have to be done.

It has frequently been pointed out, and there appears to be no difference of opinion on the subject, that there are to be found, on opposite sides of the Channel, tracts of coast presenting geological features almost identical. The English coast between Deal and Folkestone, for instance, corresponds in every particular with three miles of the French coast, a little to the westward of Calais. That the

same formations continue under the bed of the sea is a probability that has been noticed in a report to the Geological Society on "the Chalk Ridges which extend parallel to the Cliffs on each side of the Channel tending towards the North Sea," by Captain J. B. Martin, in 1839. Careful geological investigation has been made with a view to discover whether the chalk formations obtaining on each coast continue unbroken for the whole distance dividing them; and there appears no reasonable cause to doubt that this is the case.

Impressed by these facts, Mr. William Low, an engineer who for many years had been confident of the feasibility of connecting the English and French railway systems, by means of a sub-channel tunnel, set himself earnestly to examine for himself the geological formations of the two shores. After most careful examination, Mr. Low became satisfied that the deductions of the geologists were correct. His examination of the borings for several artesian wells on both sides of the Channel, strengthened his opinion as to the regularity of the strata. It became his firm conviction that along a certain line, about half a mile west of the South Foreland, and four miles west of Calais, the tunnel could be made entirely through the lower, or grey, chalk: which, owing to its comparative freedom from water, and other qualities, would be a most desirable stratum in which to work. With the result of these investigations, and with plans of the tunnels he projected, Mr. Low, in 1867, betook himself to the Emperor of the French: who, giving the English projector a most cordial reception, desired him further to organise his plans, and to come again when he might be prepared to submit definite proposals.

In 1856, M. Thomé de Gamond, a French engineer of repute, who had for many years been advocating the construction of a tunnel between England and France, obtained, by order of the emperor, an investigation of his plans at the hands of a scientific commission. This body, satisfied with the substantial accuracy of M. de Gamond's geological conclusions, recommended that his investigations should be practically tested by sinking pits on the two coasts, and driving a few short headings under the sea at the expense of the two governments. Owing possibly to the backwardness of the Great British Circumlocution Office, this recommendation does not appear to have had any practical result. In 1857, M. de Gamond published the upshot of his researches, and the report of the commission; and at the Paris Exposition of 1867, he publicly exhibited his plans. It was very natural that Mr. Low, after his interview with the emperor, should put himself in communication with M. Thomé de Gamond. This gentleman unreservedly placed his experience at Mr. Low's disposal, and, after a time, the results of their joint labours were laid before Mr. James Brunlees. He, after careful examination, consented to co-operate with the

two engineers in the prosecution of the work. A committee of French and English gentlemen of influence and position was, by desire of the emperor, formed to further the project; and it is by the executive committee of this body, under the chairmanship of Lord Richard Grosvenor, that the matter is now practically brought before the public.

But the opinions of Messrs. Low and Brunlees, and of M. Thomé de Gamond, received further confirmation.

Mr. John Hawkshaw, whose name is well known to the public at large and to the engineering world, was induced to test the question, and to ascertain by elaborate independent investigation the possibility of a sub-channel tunnel. With characteristic care and caution he took nothing for granted, but went himself over the whole ground already traversed by Mr. Low and by M. de Gamond. His geological researches led him to the same conclusions, and his expression of opinion in favour of the grey chalk was very decided. Not even satisfied with the theoretical results of these investigations, carefully though they were made, Mr. Hawkshaw held it necessary to make borings on each coast, at the precise points at which the ends of the tunnel would be situated. Thus Mr. Hawkshaw and the French commission came to the same decision. Now; the well at Calais, from which a considerable part of the geological inferences had been drawn, was at some distance from the spot where it was proposed to begin the tunnel on the French side, and possibly the strata might, in the precise place indicated, not run as anticipated.

This did not, however, turn out to be the case. The actual borings conclusively proved the correctness of the views entertained.

The boring on the English coast was commenced at St. Margaret's Bay, near the South Foreland, in the beginning of 1866, and was satisfactorily completed in 1867. It was carried completely through the chalk and into the green sand, which was reached at a depth of five hundred and forty feet below high water. The boring on the French coast, three miles westward of Calais, was carried to a depth of five hundred and twenty feet below high water. It was intended to pass through the chalk, as on the English side, but accident frustrated this design.

Simultaneously with these borings, the bottom of the Channel was carefully examined by means of a steamer provided with all suitable apparatus. The main useful results established by these experiments appear to be, that on the English coast the depth of chalk is four hundred and seventy feet below high water—of which two hundred and ninety-five feet are of the grey formation, in which it is proposed to work; that on the French coast, the depth of chalk is seven hundred and fifty feet—four hundred and eighty being grey; and that there appears to be no room to doubt the regularity of the strata between the two shores along the line proposed.

So, it would seem, firstly, that the chief condition is satisfactorily ensured, and that the geological formation of the sea's bed is such as to admit of the excavation of a tunnel through the lower grey chalk; and secondly, that it is not necessary to go to a depth unsuitable for railway traffic. It is calculated that the approaches to the tunnel can be constructed at gradients not exceeding one foot in eighty.

The next point of paramount importance to the travelling public, is the question of the safety of the tunnel when made. The dangers most carefully to be guarded against, are two: any possible irruption of water from the sea, or from unexpected land-springs; any deficiency in ventilation.

There need be little apprehension of spring waters. The difficulty in sinking wells through the chalk, on either side of the Channel, has been, not to keep the water out, but to get at it. A well sunk at Calais to the depth of a thousand feet, failed to find water at all; and in sinking deep wells at Dover, water was not to be found either until the driving of headings was resorted to. Even the Castle well, which is three hundred and sixty-three feet deep, and below high-water mark, is pumped dry by a thirty horse-power engine in three hours. Firm chalk, in fact, not split by fissures and defects, is not a good water-conducting stratum. In the Paris district, for instance, the artesian wells have been sunk through the chalk, which is there at least thirteen hundred feet thick.

If the dangers of land-water, so to speak, be thus slight, the dangers to be apprehended from sea-water appear to be even slighter. The proposed excavation would be nowhere nearer the bed of the sea than a hundred feet. It would seem to be most unlikely that the sea should make its way through this thickness of chalk. Many Cornish mines extend for considerable distances below the sea, and their comparative immunity from inroads of the sea is remarked by Pryce in his treatise on Minerals, Mines, and Mining, published in 1778. His explanation is, that such fissures as may possibly exist, and which might be permeable by water, have been, in long course of time, filled up by some impervious substance deposited by the action of the water itself, and thus a massive ceiling, as it were, of concrete has been formed above the mines. In the opinion of the eminent engineers who are advising Lord Richard Grosvenor's Executive Committee, this is probably the case in the Channel grey chalk; and looking at this circumstance and at the nature of the chalk, they do not anticipate being troubled with more water than can be easily disposed of by ordinary pumping operations.

The financial part of the question may be considered with the ventilation question. At present, with the imperfect data we have to go upon, it is matter of great difficulty to say what such an excavation would be likely to cost. Given no unforeseen impediment, given no incursion of unexpected water, given no break in the strata, a trustworthy calculation might

be arrived at. But in the face of the unknown possibilities lying at the bottom of the sea, the committee wisely abstain from yet addressing themselves to the cost of the tunnel, or to the commercial questions of profits, capital, and dividends. They propose, first—following the suggestions of their eminent scientific advisers, and the original proposal of Mr. Low—to commence their work by sinking pits on each shore, and by driving thence two small headings, or galleries, from each country, connected by transverse driftways. Ventilation would thus be secured in the manner customary in coal mines and works of a similar nature, and the feasibility or otherwise of connecting England and France by a submarine tunnel would be proved. When this is done, or when so much of it is done as fairly to prove the case, then the committee will consider the time arrived for carrying out their great enterprise in all its magnificent details. All points relating to the permanent tunnels would be settled by the experience gained in making the headings. The point of ventilation could be satisfactorily determined in the preliminary workings. It is computed that to preserve perfect ventilation in the completed tunnel, currents of air should be driven through it at the rate of ten miles an hour by steam-engines of from six to seven hundred horse power.

The cost of these preliminary headings is reckoned, upon careful calculation, at two millions sterling; and to that amount the loss, in the event of non-success, would be confined. For the purpose of raising this sum of money, the committee ask for a joint guarantee from the two governments, of interest at the rate of five per cent on any amount they shall expend up to two millions—that is to say, for an annual guarantee of fifty thousand pounds from each. It is not necessary that the whole of the two millions should be expended; for should the guaranteeing governments be dissatisfied with the progress of the works, or with their nature or results, they would at any time have power to stop the works. At the worst, and supposing the whole sum to be expended and no satisfactory result attained, fifty thousand pounds a year for a certain number of years (for the operation of a sinking fund would in process of time replace the capital) is not a very large sum for a great nation to expend in so great an attempt. If the preliminary headings turn out successful, there will be no difficulty in raising the capital necessary to complete and to work the tunnel; and the guaranteeing governments will speedily be released from their obligations.

As relates to the French government, the committee have, it is understood, every reason to be satisfied with their prospects. On this side of the Channel things progress more slowly, and Circumlocutionism is a little difficult to move. The matter has lately been brought before the President of the Board of Trade, and will probably, at no distant period, assume a definite shape. The six gentlemen who

sign the report to the Executive Committee, on which we have largely drawn in this paper, distinctly express their opinion that the risk in Channel Tunnelling is confined to one contingency only, and that is the possibility of sea water finding its way by some unforeseen fissure into the workings, in quantities too great to be overcome. Otherwise, they consider that the work may be done with comparative ease and rapidity. The six gentlemen in question are Messrs. John Hawkshaw, James Brunlees, and William Low; MM. Paulin Talabot, Michel Chevalier, and Thomé de Gamond.

If the scientific advisers of the two governments be satisfied with the exactness of these gentlemen's researches, and with the soundness of their deductions, it is probable that the Channel Tunnel will, before long, take its place as one of the things to be tried, at least.

LOAFERS IN INDIA.

"A STRANGER asks to see the Lord of Life," said my bearer. Strangers were then rare in the Upper Provinces of India, and strangers who don't tell who they are, seldom prove welcome anywhere. But the man, said my servant, was an European, and I could not refuse to see him. A more miserable-looking object I have seldom seen. He was about thirty years old, tall, lean, and gaunt: with great hungry eyes, hollow cheeks tanned by exposure to the sun, neglected hair and beard. On his head was an old felt hat, which he removed when making his approach; on his back was a ragged alpaca coat; on his legs were an equally ragged pair of native pyjamas; a pair of shoes that would scarcely hold together, were on his feet. His neck was bare, and if he wore any part of a shirt it must have been the skirt only. He came of course to beg. Before deciding how to deal with him, I bade him sit down and tell me his story.

He started conversation by informing me that he had not eaten since yesterday. I called to the khitmutgar whom I saw laying the table within the house, to bring him some curry. My visitor went to work upon the curry, like a wolf, and then asked for some water. His tone had a whine about it quite different from its clear ring when he told his honest want of food. I was sure he had never come to his present condition upon water, so I told the khitmutgar to bring brandy as well.

My guest's eyes brightened when he heard the order. He despatched the brandy and water as he had despatched the curry; and the double stimulus produced a magical effect. I had noticed an improvement in his manner when he took a seat. Now that he had eaten and drunk, I saw that he had lived on equal terms with gentlemen; so it appeared when he proceeded to give an account of himself.

He had come out to India as a cadet in the company's service, some twelve years before. From the rank of ensign he had passed to that

of lieutenant in the ordinary course of seniority. But he had got into debt, and done a few shabby things to get out of it. They were not military offences, nor indictable; but they got him a bad name, and for an officer who has once got a bad name, there is not much hope in the service. Sooner or later he will be caught tripping, and then probably cashiered. My visitor had a reputation for unruliness, under the influence of brandy-and-water; so when, after a time, he got into a drunken quarrel, and misconducted himself so far as to be brought to court-martial, he was cashiered and cast upon the world.

Had he been a man of rank or fortune there might have been hope. But he was neither. His father had made him an allowance when in the army, but considered that it would "do him no good" when he had shut himself from that career. From other branches of the public service he was necessarily excluded. But he was not without friends. One of these, a merchant in Calcutta, took him into his office. He soon tired of the regularity of the employment, and sought independent action. So he started a carrying company, with himself for treasurer. This might have succeeded; but he confounded profits with receipts, in a not uncommon manner, and the shareholders, with a prejudice in favour of dividends, wound up the concern. Then he obtained employment from a speculator to go to Australia and buy horses. He was fit for this kind of work, and bought well, but had very little money to receive on his return, for his accounts went wrong, and this failure was fatal to his obtaining more of the same kind of business. He had all this time been increasing his debts instead of paying them; and Calcutta being hot with creditors, he sought the French settlement of Chandernagore. How he lived there he could scarcely say, but he got a small remittance from home, borrowed a little more, ran up as many bills as his credit would permit, and when other resources failed, managed to make pocket-money at billiards. He had considered Calcutta too hot for him, but Chandernagore became hotter. So he went back to the capital, and, being arrested there, obtained, in time, relief under the bankruptcy law. Being then, as he said, "free as air," he went to the North-West. There he found some men driving a roaring trade as retail store-keepers, who agreed to advance him a little capital, and with this he set up a newspaper. In his prospectus he announced his new venture to be an uncompromising champion of liberty; and, in pursuance of his programme, he attacked, with the utmost violence, every person in any authority, from the governor-general down to the deputy-collector of the station. Below that grade he seemed inclined to think that honesty was possible. He was equally hard upon the military department. Nobody in the service found favour in his patriotic journal but the non-commissioned officers, except commissioned officers below the rank of major, when they chanced to get into

trouble. All this he told me very candidly, and with a humorous sense of his claims to the censorship of public morals. He was not sparing, either, of people in private life, and his columns were seldom free from personal scandals. But to his astonishment he found that all these attractions failed to make the paper profitable. His patrons, the tradesmen, enjoyed the fun for a time, but after six months or so found it expensive; whereupon the organ of liberty collapsed, and its editor vanished.

He found his next home in the hills, where he got the post of assistant-master at a school, but received, after a few weeks, a summary dismissal under some circumstances of scandal. Returning to the plains, and finding no further opening for his talents in civil life, he enlisted in a foot regiment under an assumed name. His original training fitted him for a soldier, but subordination was not in his way, and he was rapidly coming to grief again when he hit on a happy idea. This involved a commercial speculation; and one of his friends who had found the money for the paper was so pleased with it, that he bought the discharge of the speculator, who was now in a fair way of being set up again in the world. He enjoyed for some time a handsome salary for helping to work out his idea, and his share of the ultimate gains promised to secure him a fortune, when he eloped with a friend's wife. He had every reason to repent of what he called this "aristocratic folly," for his absence lost him his appointment, prospects, and all. His fortunes never prospered from that time. He tried a native state, got a commission in the service of the rajah, but left this service to become the agent of another rajah, who had been dispossessed, and whose claims he undertook to agitate against the government. He received a considerable advance of money wherewith to begin operations, but lost it all in one night at blind hookey. The patron would not advance more until some work was done, and as the agent could not work without funds, he was obliged to give up his trust altogether. His latest misadventure had occurred at Bombay, whither he had gone on his way to England, to lay the case of his client before the throne of justice. From Bombay he had made his way to where he now was; mostly on foot; obtaining shelter in native bazaars and serais; providing for himself as long as ten rupees, with which he had set out, would provide for him; and then depending upon charity.

What did he intend doing now? I asked him the question without making any comment on his career; for comment would have been useless. He did not seem quite certain what he intended doing now, but had an idea of obtaining some employment in Calcutta, if he could manage to get so far. However, he was in no state to travel, and looked a great deal too much like a half-famished hyæna to be admitted into any respectable business, so I advised him to stay where he was—not in my house, but in quarters which I promised to obtain for him. The means of payment and a

small allowance for his subsistence were obtainable, to some extent at any rate, from a local fund provided for such purposes. In the mean time I gave him a decent suit of clothes, and saw to his accommodation for the night.

I am particular in my account of this man's case, because he is a representative of a large and increasing class in India, where the "loafer" has for some years past been a nuisance to society and an embarrassment to the state. The loafer is not always a cashiered officer, or a gentleman even in the lowest conventional sense of the term. He belongs as a general rule to lower grades of life. He has come to the country, perhaps as a private soldier, perhaps as a railway guard or driver, perhaps as a clerk, perhaps on speculation, to take his chance of employment. In former times, any European of moderately good character and conduct might be sure of a certain position in the country. It was only when his habits actually disabled him for work, or when he committed some offence involving a flagrant breach of the law, that he was liable to fall to a state of actual destitution. But the establishment of the new régime in India, with its attendant results in opening new fields of industry and enterprise, and inducing over-speculation, has brought the usual consequences. Englishmen with energy and skill are now exposed to competition; and those who fail in either of these requirements must expect a very hard life. Large numbers do so fail. They have expected too much, and deserved too little; at best, they have proved unqualified for the task before them. Their physical health or their moral health has been below the requirements of the climate. They have yielded to temptations: of which excessive drinking is one. Such men necessarily go to the dogs.

There are loafers by nature, and there are loafers by circumstance. Some men inevitably fall into the condition, in a country like India; and it is only when they can command money, that they escape from its worst consequences. Others make a few downward steps, and can never muster strength to recover lost ground. Sailors were the first class that took to loafing in large numbers. For sailors, however, special provision has been made by benevolence and legislation; and their chances of falling into permanent loaferism are far less than they were a few years ago. Soldiers are still exposed to temptation in a very large degree. The restraints of military discipline, though relieved by a great deal of accommodation to circumstances, are still very irksome in India, and the majority of "time-expired" men never re-enlist, but take their discharge as soon as they are entitled to it. Some do so in reckless indifference to the future; others with the view of improving their position in a land where Europeans enjoy by tradition a prescriptive right to make their fortunes, and where, even in these days, moderately well-conducted, and even moderately ill-conducted men with white

faces manage to make far better positions for themselves than they could make in their own country. Re-enlistment, then, has become the exception rather than the rule. Besides railway employes who have been dismissed for drunkenness or other misconduct, and miscellaneous people who have sunk from better positions, or have never been able to get positions to sink from, a large number of ticket-of-leave men have of late years migrated from Western Australia, and a great many other undeniably queer characters have also swelled the number of immigrants from the "fifth quarter of the globe." Many of these come in charge of consignments of horses, but many on speculation, to make their fortunes from the shakings of the pagoda tree. Most of both classes are loafers ready made.

In every part of the country, European vagrants have become a nuisance and a pest. They corrupt our soldiers; they infuse falsehood concerning us among the natives, especially in native states, where the most intelligent among them do their best towards fomenting political intrigues; they lower our national character everywhere; and they bring lawlessness and violence upon our highways, and to our very doors. But there is one cause for congratulation in their development of late years. An amiable French gentleman said that he liked to hear a child cry, because then he knew that it would be taken out of the room. Upon the same principle I like to hear of the loafer being dangerous in India, because then I am sure that the government must take steps for his repression.

This is just what the government is about to do. The question has, for some time past, occupied the attention of the authorities at Calcutta, in consequence of representations made from all parts of the country; and Mr. Maine, the legal member of council, who has prepared a bill dealing with the difficulty, has issued a statement concerning that measure.

Two specific proposals for the repression of vagrancy, have, it appears, been made by local governments. The government of Bombay has proposed that European vagrants should be brought under a certain provision of the penal code which permits the detention of persons of suspicious character unable to find security for their good conduct. But Mr. Maine considers that this arrangement, though applicable to native society, would be unjust to the British loafer, who is remote from his own country. The government of Madras, on the other hand, is in favour of treating the case specially; this is Mr. Maine's opinion also, and he has availed himself of some of the suggestions from Madras in the measure which he has laid before the council. In this he follows, to some extent, the analogies of the English law of pauper removal. The first step which it contemplates, is the establishment, by government, of workhouses for Europeans: there being no regular poor law in India. Inasmuch, however, as several houses of industry *already exist*, powers will be given to bring

the latter within the meaning of the act. Having regard, too, to the probability that many charitable persons will be willing to co-operate in the reclamation of the vagrant, the government is empowered to appoint a committee of management, if it shall think fit, and to place the governor of the workhouse under the orders of the committee. The working of the system will be in this wise: A police officer finding a person of European extraction asking for alms, or wandering about without employment, may require him to proceed to the nearest authority, who will institute an investigation into his case, and if satisfied of his vagrancy, will make a declaration to that effect. If there be no prospect of procuring employment for him, the person so declared to be a vagrant will be at once forwarded to a workhouse. If there be a prospect of his obtaining employment at any particular place, he will be forwarded to that place. When he goes to the workhouse, every effort will be made towards his reclamation from bad habits; but he will be under rules of labour and discipline, and he will be punished for breaking them. Endeavours will also be made to find employment outside the workhouse, for those who are fit for such employment.

It is necessary, however, not only to meet the evil, but to check it at its source. For this purpose, Mr. Maine considers that provision must be made for preventing the landing in India of certain descriptions of persons. Notwithstanding precedents, he is very scrupulous in not proposing any too-general enactment upon this head. He limits the prohibition to well-defined classes. But, with a view to keep out time-expired convicts and ticket-of-leave men from Australia, he has introduced a section into the bill providing for the fine and imprisonment of a shipmaster knowingly landing in India any person who, in any English dependency, has at any time been convicted of an offence which, if committed in England, would amount to felony. And it is further intended that the Indian government shall address the governors of the Australian colonies, requesting them to give all possible publicity to the provision in question, and to the fact that unskilled European labourers of all classes have little or no prospect of employment in India. Also to the fact that they will be dealt with in the manner described.

The bill further confers on the government an ultimate power of deporting the confirmed loafer, who is, however, to be provided, when he reaches his destination, with funds for a month's subsistence. There can be no doubt about the wisdom of the arrangement, for nothing, as Mr. Maine observes, could be more hopeless than the condition of a vagrant remaining in an Indian workhouse, unreclaimed or incapable of employment. But the question has arisen whether the government, or, in other words, the tax-paying community, can fairly be charged with the passage and subsistence money of the deported man, in cases where he has been brought to India for the

purpose of serving a company or private employer. Mr. Maine meets the difficulty in this way. He proposes that if a person, brought to India by a company or a private employer, become chargeable to the government as a vagrant, within one year after his arrival, the cost of deportation shall be recoverable from the importer; for the reason that if any European break down within so short a time, whether from physical or moral causes, there must have been carelessness or error in selecting him, and the person who made the mistake must pay for it. The bill includes provisions for the good treatment of the loafer during his voyage home, and the due payment to him of his money on landing. It is also made compulsory on masters of sailing vessels, to receive as passengers persons so deported on the tender of proper payment. These provisions are, to a great extent, taken from analogous enactments of the British parliament relative to the removal to their native place of Lascars found vagrant in England, and of English seamen left destitute in colonial ports. There is further provision (intended to meet certain difficulties in the way of criminal justice over British subjects in the provinces), to the effect that British subjects being registered as vagrants, shall be subject to the criminal code in all parts of the country equally with Europeans generally, who are now under the code. This is considered the more desirable, as a not inconsiderable number of the vagrant class are found to belong to foreign nationalities.

These are the main provisions of the new measure for dealing with loafers in India. It treats them with a tenderness unknown to legislation in England, where such classes are concerned; and even when it forces them back upon our poor laws, it at least gives them a fair start. A judicious loafer, I should think, might date the foundation of a new career from the day when he was taken in hand by the government.

The wretched man who came to me in my verandah, so abject at first, and so soon restored to his social status by brandy-and-water, would at least have had a fair chance under Mr. Maine's act. As it was, I doubt if he ever did much good for himself or anybody else. After waiting a sufficient time in the station to find that his prospect of employment came to nothing, he went his way. With a little help which I gave him, he set up, after passing the necessary examination, as a vakeel, that is to say, an advocate who, in inferior courts, is entitled to the same privileges as a barrister in Calcutta. But I soon heard that his old habits were too strong for him, and that, although he possessed undoubted abilities, clients would not trust him. I have reason to believe that he eventually died of delirium tremens in the China Bazaar. Under Mr. Maine's act, he would have been sent back to England; there, rescued from old associations, and with money enough to keep him for a month, he would have had one last chance of

retrieving his position. I by no means assert that he would have turned it to good account; but he would have had it.

THE MOUNTAIN BROOK.

IN THREE SONNETS

I.

HEAVEN help me! Whither would my dark thoughts run!

I look around me, trembling fearfully;

The dreadful silence of the Silent One

Freezes my lips, and all is sad to see.

Hark! hark! what small voice murmurs "God made me!"

It is the brooklet, singing all alone,
Sparkling with silver pleasure of its own,
And running, self-contented, sweet and free.

O Brooklet, brightening from woods of fir,

Finding the open hill and flowing fleet,

Thou comest as a little messenger,

With shining wings and silver-sandal'd feet;

Faint falls thy music on a soul astir,

And, in a moment, all the world looks sweet!

II.

Whence thou hast come, thou knowest not, little brook,

Nor whither thou art bound. Yet wild and gay,

Pleased in thyself, and pleasing all that look,

Thou wendest, all the seasons, on thy way.

Whether the sunbeams shine, or lightnings play

Into thine azure eyes, thro' light or shade;

To think of solemn things thou wast not made,

But to sing on, for pleasure, night and day.

Such happy hearts are wandering, crystal clear,

In the great world where men and women dwell.

Earth's mighty shows they neither love nor fear,

They are content to be, while I rebel,

Out of their own delight dispensing cheer,

And ever softly whispering "all is well!"

III.

O sing, sweet brook, sing on, while in a dream

I feel the sweetness of the years go by!

The crags and peaks are softened now, and seem

Gently to sleep against the gentle sky;

Old scenes and faces glimmer up and die,

With outlines of sweet thought obscured too long;

Like boys that shout at play far voices cry;

O sing! for I am weeping at the song.

I know not what I am, but only know

I have had glimpses, tongue may never speak;

No more I balance human joy and woe,

But think of my transgressions, and am meek.

Father! forgive the child who fretted so,

For lo; a shower of grace is on his cheek!

LANDOR'S LIFE.

PREFIXED to the second volume of MR. FORSTER'S admirable biography of WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR,* is an engraving from a portrait of that remarkable man when seventy-seven years of age, by BOXALL. The writer of these lines can testify that the original picture is a singularly good likeness, the result of close and subtle observation on the part of the painter; but, for this very reason, the engraving gives a most inadequate idea of the merit of the picture and the character of the man.

* Walter Savage Landor, a Biography by John Forster, 2 vols. Chapman and Hall.

From the engraving, the arms and hands are omitted. In the picture, they are, as they were in nature, indispensable to a correct reading of the vigorous face. The arms were very peculiar. They were rather short, and were curiously restrained and checked in their action at the elbows; in the action of the hands, even when separately clenched, there was the same kind of pause, and a noticeable tendency to relaxation on the part of the thumb. Let the face be never so intense or fierce, there was a commentary of gentleness in the hands, essential to be taken along with it. Like Hamlet, Lander would speak daggers but use none. In the expression of his hands, though angrily closed, there was always gentleness and tenderness; just as when they were open, and the handsome old gentleman would wave them with a little courtly flourish that sat well upon him, as he recalled some classic compliment that he had rendered to some reigning Beauty, there was a chivalrous grace about them such as pervades his softer verses. Thus, the fictitious Mr. Boythorn (to whom we may refer without impropriety in this connexion, as Mr. Forster does) declaims "with unimaginable energy" the while his bird is "perched upon his thumb," and he "softly smooths its feathers with his forefinger."

From the spirit of Mr. Forster's Biography these characteristic hands are never omitted, and hence (apart from its literary merits) its great value. As the same masterly writer's *Life and Times of Oliver Goldsmith* is a generous and yet conscientious picture of a period, so this is a not less generous and yet conscientious picture of one life; of a life, with all its aspirations, achievements, and disappointments; all its capabilities, opportunities, and irretrievable mistakes. It is essentially a sad book, and herein lies proof of its truth and worth. The life of almost any man possessing great gifts, would be a sad book to himself; and this book enables us not only to see its subject, but to be its subject, if we will.

Mr. Forster is of opinion that "Lander's fame very surely awaits him." This point admitted or doubted, the value of the book remains the same. It needs not to know his works (otherwise than through his biographer's exposition), it needs not to have known himself, to find a deep interest in these pages. More or less of their warning is in every conscience; and some admiration of a fine genius, and of a great, wild, generous nature, incapable of mean

self-extenuation or dissimulation—if unhappily incapable of self-repression too—should be in every breast. "There may be still living many persons," Walter Lander's brother, Robert, writes to Mr. Forster of this book, "who would contradict any narrative of yours in which the best qualities were remembered, the worst forgotten." Mr. Forster's comment is: "I had not waited for this appeal to resolve, that, if this memoir were written at all, it should contain, as far as might lie within my power, a fair statement of the truth." And this eloquent passage of truth immediately follows: "Few of his infirmities are without something kindly or generous about them; and we are not long in discovering there is nothing so wildly incredible that he will not himself in perfect good faith believe. When he published his first book of poems on quitting Oxford, the profits were to be reserved for a distressed clergyman. When he published his Latin poems, the poor of Leipzig were to have the sum they realised. When his comedy was ready to be acted, a Spaniard who had sheltered him at Castro was to be made richer by it. When he competed for the prize of the Academy of Stockholm, it was to go to the poor of Sweden. If nobody got anything from any one of these enterprises, the fault at all events was not his. With his extraordinary power of forgetting disappointments, he was prepared at each successive failure to start afresh, as if each had been a triumph. I shall have to delineate this peculiarity as strongly in the last half as in the first half of his life, and it was certainly an amiable one. He was ready at all times to set aside, out of his own possessions, something for somebody who might please him for the time; and when frailties of temper and tongue are noted, this other eccentricity should not be omitted. He desired eagerly the love as well as the good opinion of those whom for the time he esteemed, and no one was more affectionate while under such influences. It is not a small virtue to feel such genuine pleasure, as he always did in giving and receiving pleasure. His generosity, too, was bestowed chiefly on those who could make small acknowledgment in thanks and no return in kind."

Some of his earlier contemporaries may have thought him a vain man. Most assuredly he was not, in the common acceptance of the term. A vain man has little or no admiration to bestow upon competitors. Lander had an inexhaustible

fund. He thought well of his writings, or he would not have preserved them. He said and wrote that he thought well of them, because that was his mind about them, and he said and wrote his mind. He was one of the few men of whom you might always know the whole: of whom you might always know the worst, as well as the best. He had no reservations or duplicities. "No, by Heaven!" he would say ("with unimaginable energy"), if any good adjective were coupled with him which he did not deserve: "I am nothing of the kind. I wish I were; but I don't deserve the attribute, and I never did, and I never shall!" His intense consciousness of himself never led to his poorly excusing himself, and seldom to his violently asserting himself. When he told some little story of his bygone social experiences, in Florence, or where not, as he was fond of doing, it took the innocent form of making all the interlocutors, Landors. It was observable, too, that they always called him "Mr. Landor"—rather ceremoniously and submissively. There was a certain "Caro Padre Abate Marina"—invariably so addressed in these anecdotes—who figured through a great many of them, and who always expressed himself in this deferential tone.

Mr. Forster writes of Landor's character thus:

"A man must be judged, at first, by what he says and does. But with him such extravagance as I have referred to was little more than the habitual indulgence (on such themes) of passionate feelings and language, indecent indeed but utterly purposeless; the mere explosion of wrath provoked by tyranny or cruelty; the irregularities of an overheated steam-engine too weak for its own vapour. It is very certain that no one could detest oppression more truly than Landor did in all seasons and times; and if no one expressed that scorn, that abhorrence of tyranny and fraud, more hastily or more intemperately, all his fire and fury signified really little else than ill-temper too easily provoked. Not to justify or excuse such language, but to explain it, this consideration is urged. If not uniformly placable, Landor was always compassionate. He was tender-hearted rather than bloody-minded at all times, and upon only the most partial acquaintance with his writings could other opinion be formed. A completer knowledge of them would satisfy any one that he had as little real disposition to kill a king as to kill a mouse. In fact there is

not a more marked peculiarity in his genius than the union with its strength of a most uncommon gentleness, and in the personal ways of the man this was equally manifest."—*Vol. I. p. 496.*

Of his works, thus:

"Though his mind was cast in the antique mould, it had opened itself to every kind of impression through a long and varied life; he has written with equal excellence in both poetry and prose, which can hardly be said of any of his contemporaries; and perhaps the single epithet by which his books would be best described is that reserved exclusively for books not characterised only by genius, but also by special individuality. They are unique. Having possessed them, we should miss them. Their place would be supplied by no others. They have that about them, moreover, which renders it almost certain that they will frequently be resorted to in future time. There are none in the language more quotable. Even where impulsiveness and want of patience have left them most fragmentary, this rich compensation is offered to the reader. There is hardly a conceivable subject, in life or literature, which they do not illustrate by striking aphorisms, by concise and profound observations, by wisdom ever applicable to the needs of men, and by wit as available for their enjoyment. Nor, above all, will there anywhere be found a more pervading passion for liberty, a fiercer hatred of the base, a wider sympathy with the wronged and the oppressed, or help more ready at all times for those who fight at odds and disadvantage against the powerful and the fortunate, than in the writings of Walter Savage Landor."—*Last page of second volume.*

The impression was strong upon the present writer's mind, as on Mr. Forster's, during years of close friendship with the subject of this biography, that his animosities were chiefly referable to the singular inability in him to dissociate other people's ways of thinking from his own. He had, to the last, a ludicrous grievance (both Mr. Forster and the writer have often amused themselves with it), against a good-natured nobleman, doubtless perfectly unconscious of having ever given him offence. The offence was, that on the occasion of some dinner party in another nobleman's house, many years before, this innocent lord (then a commoner) had passed in to dinner, through some door, before him, as he himself was about to pass in through that same

door with a lady on his arm. Now, Landor was a gentleman of most scrupulous politeness, and in his carriage of himself towards ladies there was a certain mixture of stateliness and deference, belonging to quite another time and, as MR. PEPYS would observe, "mighty pretty to see." If he could by any effort imagine himself committing such a high crime and misdemeanour as that in question, he could only imagine himself as doing it of a set purpose, under the sting of some vast injury, to inflict a great affront. A deliberately designed affront on the part of another man, it therefore remained to the end of his days. The manner in which, as time went on, he permeated the unfortunate lord's ancestry with this offence, was whimsically characteristic of Landor. The writer remembers very well, when only the individual himself was held responsible in the story for the breach of good breeding; but in another ten years or so, it began to appear that his father had always been remarkable for ill manners; and in yet another ten years or so, his grandfather developed into quite a prodigy of coarse behaviour.

Mr. Boythorn—if he may again be quoted—said of his adversary, Sir Leicester Dedlock: "That fellow is, *and his father was, and his grandfather was*, the most stiff-necked, arrogant, imbecile, pig-headed numskull, ever, by some inexplicable mistake of Nature, born in any station of life but a walking-stick's!"

The strength of some of Mr. Landor's most captivating kind qualities was traceable to the same source. Knowing how keenly he himself would feel the being at any small social disadvantage, or the being unconsciously placed in any ridiculous light, he was wonderfully considerate of shy people, or of such as might be below the level of his usual conversation, or otherwise out of their element. The writer once observed him in the keenest distress of mind in behalf of a modest young stranger who came into a drawing-room with a glove on his head. An expressive commentary on this sympathetic condition, and on the delicacy with which he advanced to the young stranger's rescue, was afterwards furnished by himself at a friendly dinner at Gore House, when it was the most delightful of houses. His dress—say, his cravat or shirt-collar—had become slightly disarranged on a hot evening, and Count D'Orsay laughingly called his attention to *the circumstance as we rose from table.*

Landor became flushed, and greatly agitated: "My dear Count D'Orsay, I thank you! My dear Count D'Orsay, I thank you from my soul for pointing out to me the abominable condition to which I am reduced! If I had entered the Drawing-room, and presented myself before Lady Blessington in so absurd a light, I would have instantly gone home, put a pistol to my head, and blown my brains out!"

Mr. Forster tells a similar story of his keeping a company waiting dinner, through losing his way; and of his seeing no remedy for that breach of politeness but cutting his throat, or drowning himself, unless a countryman whom he met could direct him by a short road to the house where the party were assembled. Surely these are expressive notes on the gravity and reality of his explosive inclinations to kill kings!

His manner towards boys was charming, and the earnestness of his wish to be on equal terms with them and to win their confidence was quite touching. Few, reading Mr. Forster's book, can fail to see in this, his pensive remembrance of that "studious wilful boy at once shy and impetuous," who had not many intimacies at Rugby, but who was "generally popular and respected, and used his influence often to save the younger boys from undue harshness or violence." The impulsive yearnings of his passionate heart towards his own boy, on their meeting at Bath, after years of separation, likewise burn through this phase of his character.

But a more spiritual, softened, and unselfish aspect of it, was to be derived from his respectful belief in happiness which he himself had missed. His marriage had not been a felicitous one—it may be fairly assumed for either side—but no trace of bitterness or distrust concerning other marriages was in his mind. He was never more serene than in the midst of a domestic circle, and was invariably remarkable for a perfectly benignant interest in young couples and young lovers. That, in his ever-fresh fancy, he conceived in this association innumerable histories of himself involving far more unlikely events than never happened than Isaac D'Israeli ever imagined, is hardly to be doubted; but as to this part of his real history he was mute, or revealed his nobleness in an impulse to be generously just. We verge on delicate ground, but a slight remembrance rises in the writer which can grate nowhere. Mr. Forster relates how a certain friend, being

in Florence, sent him home a leaf from the garden of his old house at Fiesole. That friend had first asked him what he should send him home, and he had stipulated for this gift—found by Mr. Forster among his papers after his death. The friend, on coming back to England, related to Landor that he had been much embarrassed, on going in search of the leaf, by his driver's suddenly stopping his horses in a narrow lane, and presenting him (the friend) to "La Signora Landora." The lady was walking alone on a bright Italian-winter-day; and the man, having been told to drive to the Villa Landora, inferred that he must be conveying a guest or visitor. "I pulled off my hat," said the friend, "apologised for the coachman's mistake, and drove on. The lady was walking with a rapid and firm step, had bright eyes, a fine fresh colour, and looked animated and agreeable." Landor checked off each clause of the description, with a stately nod of more than ready assent, and replied, with all his tremendous energy concentrated into the sentence: "And the Lord forbid that I should do otherwise than declare that she always was agreeable—to every one but *me*!"

Mr. Forster step by step builds up the evidence on which he writes this life and states this character. In like manner, he gives the evidence for his high estimation of Landor's works, and—it may be added—for their recompense against some neglect, in finding so sympathetic, acute, and devoted a champion. Nothing in the book is more remarkable than his examination of each of Landor's successive pieces of writing, his delicate discernment of their beauties, and his strong desire to impart his own perceptions in this wise to the great audience that is yet to come. It rarely befalls an author to have such a commentator: to become the subject of so much artistic skill and knowledge, combined with such infinite and loving pains. Alike as a piece of Biography, and as a commentary upon the beauties of a great writer, the book is a massive book; as the man and the writer were massive too. Sometimes, when the balance held by Mr. Forster has seemed for a moment to turn a little heavily against the infirmities of temperament of a grand old friend, we have felt something of a shock; but we have not once been able to gainsay the justice of the scales. This feeling, too, has only fluttered out of the detail, here or there, and has vanished before the whole. We fully agree with Mr. Forster that

"Judgment has been passed"—as it should be—"with an equal desire to be only just on all the qualities of his temperament which affected necessarily not his own life only. But, now that the story is told, no one will have difficulty in striking the balance between its good and ill; and what was really imperishable in Landor's genius will not be treasured less, or less understood, for the more perfect knowledge of his character."

Mr. Forster's second volume gives a fine simile of Landor's writing at seventy-five. It may be interesting to those who are curious in caligraphy, to know that its resemblance to the recent handwriting of that great genius, M. VICTOR HUGO, is singularly strong.

In a military burial-ground in India, the name of WALTER LANDOR is associated with the present writer's, over the grave of a young officer. No name could stand there, more inseparably associated in the writer's mind with the dignity of generosity: with a noble scorn of all littleness, all cruelty, oppression, fraud, and false pretence.

AS THE CROW FLIES.

DUE EAST. CAISTOR AND NORWICH.

FROM Caistor look-out, sixty feet high, the itinerant bird watches the brown-winged herring boats beating up against the wind; he sees miles of grassy sand-hills, and white belts of shore, gleaming almost as snowy as the racing foam; on the foreshore, like stranded turtles, loll red-bottomed boats among patches of coarse gorse, and on the inner slopes of the hills, clear of the long loose drifts which here and there encroach on the marshes, rise the red roofs and black tarred walls of fishermen's villages; the fishermen's gardens and hedgerows bordering the waste, gradually lead on to belts of trees and chequerings of fertile fields; and at the doors of the Caistor cottages the crow can clearly discern rugged-faced fishwives sitting netting among lobster-pots and heaps of fishing furniture. The church tower at Caistor has a legend of its own, for over the centre of its parapet a long low ridge marks the tomb of a Norfolk maiden, who, losing her lover by shipwreck on this treacherous coast, directed, before her heart quite broke, that her body should be buried up there under a pyramid, which should be high enough to serve as a sea mark. The pyramid is gone, even the lover's name is forgotten, but the woman's true devotion is still remembered. About a mile from Caistor, over the fields, a long line of old brick wall, beyond a moat screened by tall trees, marks the ruins of the Falstolfs' old fortified mansion, Caistor Castle, built in the reign of Henry the Fifth. It was then three hundred feet square, and had a round tower at each corner. Only one of these

towers now remains. Inside, the ruins are hidden by fruit-trees, elder-trees, and ivy, but there are still traces of the ruffling days of brave Sir John and the letter-writing Pastons who succeeded him. The old gateway still stands, but it now leads only to poultry sheds. The bay window of the hall also exists; you can trace the gable mark of the roof, and there is still the tower near the chapel where a priest lived, to pray for those who nourished him. The tower is famous for its jackdaw's nest—a great pile of loose sticks, reaching from the winding stairs to the window, and expressing years of industry. On the ground-floor is a small chamber with groined ceiling and two light foliated windows, but there is no roof above but the sky, and the old fireplaces, black against the walls above, are no longer warmed by friendly fires. The Sir John Falstolf who built this castle (one of the earliest fortified brick houses in the kingdom) was a great warrior in the French wars of Henry the Fifth and Sixth. It was this commander who, just before Joan of Arc appeared to scare the English, left Paris one Lent with one thousand five hundred men to convey four hundred waggons of herrings and other provisions to the English besiegers of Orleans, just then disheartened by the death of the Earl of Salisbury, their commander. He was attacked at Rouvrai by four thousand French and Scotch cavalry, but surrounding his men with a rampart of his waggons, he and his archers repulsed two savage attacks, killed six hundred of the enemy, and reached triumphantly the English camp. When Orleans had been rescued by the maiden of Domremy, the English forts burned, and the Earl of Suffolk taken prisoner, Talbot and Falstolf retreated together towards Paris. At Patay, Talbot, bull-dog as he was, would retreat no further, so stood at bay, lost twelve thousand men, and was struck from his horse and taken. Falstolf refusing, however, to fight with soldiers demoralised by the recent loss of three fortresses, left Talbot there to suffer for his obstinacy. The English, in a rage at his desertion of Talbot, branded him as a coward, and condemned him to forfeit his garter. But the Norfolk worthy calmly persisted, and proved, to the satisfaction of the Regent, that nothing but defeat was possible with soldiers that Jeanne d'Arc had recently cowed. This Sir John, who died in 1459, aged eighty, had a mansion also at Yarmouth, and traded there in corn and wool.

If the crow may be allowed to be for once biographical, it may not be amiss to here briefly sketch the career of a gentleman soldier in the reigns of Henry the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth, in order to show the life men led in those stormy ages. Sir John, born about 1378, was the son of a gentleman of Yarmouth, renowned for his piety and charity. His father dying when he was young, John's person and estate were committed to the guardianship of John, Duke of Bedford, our regent in France. It is supposed that when a youth, *learning arms under Thomas of Lancaster, the second son of Henry the Fourth, the young*

Norfolk squire accompanied that noble (afterwards Duke of Clarence) to Ireland, where Thomas was lord-lieutenant, and fleshed his maiden sword against the rough kerns and savage gallowglasses of Munster and Connaught. He married, in Ireland, a daughter of Lord Tibetot, and bound himself, on the Feast of St. Hilary, which was their marriage day, in the sum of one thousand pounds, to pay her one hundred pounds a year for pin money. Hardened to steel in the wars of Normandy, Anjou, Mayne, and Guienne, Sir John, now a knight banneret, and knight companion of the most noble Order of the Garter, grew abroad a brave and wise general, and at home a charitable and hospitable man, a founder of religious buildings and stately edifices; moreover, an enlightened patron of worthy and learned men, and a benefactor to the pious and poor, especially those of Norfolk. In 1413, the first year of Henry the Fifth, he had the castle and domain of Veires, in Gascony, given him to guard. When his chivalrous young king landed in France, Sir John joined him at Harfleur with ten men-at-arms and thirty archers, and the Earl of Derby then appointed him governor of the town. At the great *melée* at Agincourt Sir John bore himself nobly. Next we meet Sir John pushing deep into Normandy, then driven slowly to Harfleur, and there besieged. For taking Caen, Courcy, Falaise, and other towns, he was granted the manor of Friteuse, near Harfleur, and in 1433 was made lieutenant for the king in Normandy. Many towns he thundered down, at many barred-up gates he knocked for admittance. His prowess at the "Battle of the Herrings" we have before mentioned. After that, the aging warrior reaped more laurels. He was an ambassador at the Council of Basle; he led our succours to the Duke of Brittany; he was our ambassador at the final peace with bellicose France, and when the Regent died, Sir John was one of his executors. In 1440, the old warrior returned to the new moated house at Caistor, and there hung up his battered helmet and his cloven target. In 1450, the king ordered Thomas Danyell, Esq., to pay one hundred pounds for having seized a ship of Sir John's called *The George* of Prussia. He died, worn out with old man's fever, after a lingering one hundred and forty-eight days of asthma, on the Festival of St. Leonard, in the last year of the reign of Henry the Sixth. The old scarred hulk was buried with great solemnity under an arch in the Chapel of our Lady, of his own building, at the abbey of St. Bennet in the Holm, Norfolk; and so much was he venerated in the county, that in the fifteenth of Edward the Fourth, John Beauchamp appointed a chantry there, more especially for the soul of Sir John Falstolf. The old knight left Caistor to John Paston, eldest son of Judge Paston, to found, with the manors and lands, a college of seven priests and seven poor men. The Duke of Norfolk, however, claimed Caistor, and in 1469 came before the old turreted brick mansion with three thousand men

armed with guns and culverins, and besieged it doggedly for five weeks and three days. A wicked justice named Yelverton and other lawyers also tried to get pickings out of the place, and at one time Lord Scales took actual possession of it in the name of King Edward the Fourth, who, however, eventually restored it to the Pastons, who soon afterwards nearly lost it by fire. Besides Caistor, Sir John had a house at Norwich in Pokethorp, opposite St. James's Church. This large-minded soldier was a great benefactor to Cambridge, helping to found philosophical schools; nor did he forget the sister sent of learning, for he gave broad lands to Magdalene College, out of friendship to William Wainfleet, the founder (who, indeed, had the intention of founding a special college where Sir John's soul might be prayed for). It is a singular fact (considering that, following some vague old story, Shakespeare has traduced this excellent man) that among other property left by Falstolf to Magdalene College was the Boar's Head in Southwark, where the poet might have found the name still traditional. By a strange caprice of genius the invincible old warrior was changed into that delightful fat rascal to whose sins we are so lenient; that bragging, toping, witty, good-for-nothing master of Nym and Bardolph.

There is a wild legend about Caistor (worthy of some old German tower under the shadow of the Brocken) that on certain midnights a black coach drawn by headless horses, and driven by a skeleton, or some such appropriate coachman, rolls silently into the ruined and echoing court-yard and carries off a freight of unearthly passengers; whether ghosts of sinful knights long dead, or a relieved guard of demon sentinels, is not exactly known. But indeed Norfolk legends are often wild enough, for at Over-Strand the country people believe in a headless coal-black demon dog, with flaming hair, known to mortals as "Old Shock," which on stormy nights chases along the desolate and dangerous shores between Over-Strand and Beeston, exulting at the frequent shipwrecks.

But the crow must by no means leave the old brick ruin without a word about those delightful "Paston Letters," many of which were here indited by anxious Yorkists. They present a perfect picture of social life during the bloodthirsty wars of the Roses. One almost wonders, when England was streaming with blood, how people could have the heart to propose marriage, or to write for figs and raisins, and "ij pots off oyle for saladys." Soon after the battle of Mortimer Cross, when Henry the Sixth was in London lying feebly in the iron grip of the king-maker, one of the Pastons writes about the troubled state of Norfolk, that traitors had risen after the Battle of Wakefield to murder John Dameme (whoever he might be); that the people at Castle Rising were gathering and hiring armour; also that plunderers in Yarmouth had robbed a ship "under colour of my Lord of Warwick." In December, 1463, John Paston, the youngest, writing home to the old Norfolk house from

Northumberland, whither he had gone to besiege three castles recently taken by Queen Margaret, says:

"I pray you let my father have knowledge of this letter, and of the other letter that I sent to my mother by a Felbrigg man, and how that I pray, both him and my mother lowly of their blessings. . . . I pray you that this bill may recommend me to my sister Margery [he had before sent remembrances to his grandmother and cousin Clere], and to my mistress Joan Gayne, and to all good masters and fellows within Caster." Then what a picture of Caxton's times is given in the letter dated Coventry, Tuesday after Corpus Christi Day (circa 1445). It is addressed by one John Northwood, to Viscount Beaumont, a nobleman afterwards slain by Jack Cade's men.

"On Corpus Christi even last passed between eight and nine of the clock at afternoon, Sir Humphrey Stafford had brought my master Sir James of Ormond towards his inn from my Lady of Shrewsbury, and returned from him towards his inn; he met with Sir Robert Harcourt, coming from his mother towards his inn, and passed Sir Humphrey, and Richard his son came somewhat behind, and when they met together, they fell in hands together, and Sir Robert smote him a great stroke on the head with his sword, and Sir Richard with his dagger hastily went towards him, and as he stumbled one of Harcourt's men smote him in the back with a knife; men wot not who it was readily; his father heard a noise and rode towards them, and his men ran before him thitherward; and in the going down off his horse, one, he wot not who, behind him smote him on the head with an edged tool, men know not with us with what weapon, that he fell down, and his son fell down before him as good as dead, and all this was done as men say in a paternoster while—and forthwith Sir Humphrey Stafford's men followed after and slew two men of Harcourt's, one Swynnerton and Bradshawe, and more be hurt, some be gone, and some be in prison, in the jail at Coventry. . . . and Almighty Jesu preserve your high estate, my special lord, and send you long life and good health."

Such were the rough-and-ready times when the streets of English towns were crowded by the quarrelsome Montagues and Capulets of those gusty days.

And now the bird darts through the Norfolk air to Filby decoy, to other scenes and far different associations, going back to those days of bolster breeches and peasecod doublets, when King James spluttered out his alarm at Jesuit plots in clumsy Latin or uncouth Scotch. But Ranworth decoy, lucidly explained by a recent traveller in Norfolk, gives even a better notion of the Norfolk decoys than that at Filby. At Ranworth, where the marshes vein the flat pastures with a deep green, and where the pools and dykes are marked in the ground plan by waving green patches and long sharp lines, where gnats darken the aguish air, and all day and night you hear the restless clank

of the pump mills that are draining the levels which look so flat and so Dutch, you come to a wood on the margin of a lake. The first glimpse of the decoy is an arch of brown network among the trees, and glimpses of pale fences of reeds. In the centre of a hundred acres of reedy and oozy water, thick with water-lilies and ranunculuses, spread eleven shallow creeks, star fashion. These rays, about six yards wide at their mouth, narrowing gradually as they recede, and craftily curved to the right, run about seventy-five yards each, and terminate in a point. At about thirty feet from the mouth of each there rises an iron-rod arch some ten feet high, smaller arches following, the end one sinking to less than two feet high and wide. These arches are covered with a cord net which, staked to the ground, forms a long cage broad and open to the pool. These are what Norfolk men call "pipes." On each side of the airy traps are screens of greyish yellow reeds five feet high; these screens run in zigzag about a foot from the water's edge, and traverse the edge of the pipe alternately high and low. Wild fowl always fly against the wind, so that a pipe to be successful must have the wind blowing down it from the narrow end towards the mouth. In Norfolk the north-east pipe is a special favourite. There is no mystery in decoying, it needs only a man, some decoy ducks, and a trained dog. The ducks are taught to rise and come to the man for the bruised barley he sprinkles on the water at the signal of a very faint yet clear whistle. The "piper" dog may be a mongrel, but it must be of a grey colour, and of quiet, obedient, staid habits. The decoy season is almost exactly contemporaneous with the oyster season. The time chosen is often noon on a bright day. The decoy man carries with him a piece of lighted peat to neutralise any scent of himself that might scare the fowl. Stealing along like a murderer, the man slips behind the screen, and looks through loopholes prepared in the reed walls. If there be any signs of emerald necks and brown backs he gives the whistle, fatal as Varney's signal to Amy Robsart. The moment the decoy ducks swim towards the mouth of the pipe the wild birds gain confidence, and enter more or less eagerly into the pipe, allured by the floating barley; at the same moment the piper dog, running along the screen, leaps back through the first break in search of the biscuit thrown him. This instantly allures the teal and widgeon, who then flock in with greater confidence. They are now safe in the toils, and the decoy-man having fitted a purse-net about as large as a corn-sack to the narrow end of the opening, an assistant, on a given signal, shows himself at one of the breaks in the screen in the rear of the ducks, and, without shouting, throws up his arms or waves his hat. The sensitive birds, always suspicious of man, instantly with splash, flap, and screaming quack, race up the pipe in utter panic, and making for the first opening, find themselves in the inhospitable purse-net. The decoy-man soon appears to the jostling captives, and in

five minutes they are ready for Leadenhall Market.

But the decoy-man has many vexations. There is one artful species of duck known as the Pochard, which is always fatal to his schemes. A demoniacal craft is possessed by these birds, who, the moment there is an alarm, turn, dive and re-emerge beyond the pipes. Often do they form a vanguard and swim forward in line, taking precedence probably on the strength of superior subtlety, and so keep back their unsuspecting companions. Decoy-men have tried to capture these sagacious wretches by sunken bait, bristling with ambushed hooks, but the pochard's dying struggles are scarcely very alluring to the inquiring widgeon. A heron perching on the crown of the netted arch will often scare the suspicious birds, a sullen pike splashing in the shallows, or the sight of even the tip of the black nose of an otter is also fatal to sport. A gunshot in a distant field, the ring of a hammer, or the rumbling of cart wheels, will frighten away ducks for weeks. Decoying, says a very sound authority, was more profitable before steam-boats brought over such heaps of Dutch and Flemish ducks. Yet there are still times when wild ducks fetch eight shillings a couple in Leadenhall Market. Two thousand birds all but thirty-seven were captured at Ranworth decoy in 1858-59.

Fast now to Norwich bears the voyaging bird, for how can any crow of sagacity crow at all if he neglect the old cathedral city of Norfolk with its seventy-five thousand people, its thirty-six churches, its narrow, crooked, steep streets, its busy factories, and its crowd of low and even thatched cottages, its Bigod's Castle, now a prison, on a central mound, and all these treasures heaped in a deep basin, scooped out of the level table-land? St. Andrew's Hall, where concerts are given and corporation feasts held, was once a church of the Benedictine friars, and in it Charles the Second and the ill-favoured swarthy Portuguese queen whom he neglected so shamelessly, dined in 1671. Some good memorial pictures, expressing various paroxysms of national gratitude, loyalty, and party feeling, adorn the walls. Meretricious, graceful Lawrences; delightful, sketchy Gainsboroughs; vigorous, coarse Opies; and, above all, Sir William Beechey's manly portrait of that great Norfolk worthy—Nelson.

Apropos of art, Norwich is the city in which to see old Crome's fine landscapes. This great artist, the son of a poor journeyman weaver, was born in a humble Norwich public-house, in 1769. At first an errand-boy to a doctor, who found him clumsy and slovenly, he was afterwards apprenticed to a house and sign-painter. He lodged with a painter's apprentice, who had a certain rude taste for art, and the two boys drew and painted together. Sir William Beechey, who was kind to the Norfolk lad, observed with surprise his rapid progress. Marrying, however, early, Crome became so poor that he had to paint sugar ornaments for the confectioners, to clip his cat's tail to make brushes,

and to use pieces of bed-tick or old apron instead of canvas. But there is no stopping a man of that kind. Crome soon mastered his art, and learned with naïve simplicity to show the beauty of the simplest natural effects; he could conjure with the rudest spells—a few old trees, a broken cottage, a rough scrap of heath; yet whatever he painted was always luminous, broad, and massive. He always clung to Norfolk and to simple subjects, and never fell over the fatal Grand Style, like poor Haydon and others. Founding the Norwich Society of Artists, he became its president, and did good service to art in originating, in 1805, the first provincial exhibition of pictures in England. Crome died in 1821, and the same year one hundred and eleven of his paintings were exhibited, beginning with "The Sawyers," a sketch made for a public-house in 1790, down to a fine wood scene, painted within a month of his departure. Mousehold Heath was old Crome's favourite hunting ground.

With Norwich, as with so many other spots the crow has visited, Shakespeare has associated himself. The old black flint wall that once girdled the town wears for a brooch at one spot the Erpingham Gate, a fine pointed arch of the fourteenth century, with panelled buttresses, and a statue of the builder, sentinelled high up in a niche. This grey, silent sentinel was an old soldier whom Shakespeare, with an affection for the character, calls "a good old commander and a most kind gentleman." He lent his cloak to Henry the Fifth on the eve of Agincourt, and bore himself nobly in that sturdy encounter. Sir John favoured the Lollards, and for this heresy was sentenced by Bishop Spencer, a fighting bishop, to build this gate as a penance. Norwich is full of old houses, old churches, and old bits of wall, stolen originally from the Roman station at Caistor, for the legend says:

Caistor was a city when Norwich was none,
And Norwich was built of Caistor stone.

The churches, too, are of great antiquity. St. Julian's, with the round and very ancient tower; St. John's, Maddermarket, earlier than the Confessor's coronation; and St. Peter's, Mancroft, the finest parish church in England, excepting St. Mary's, Redcliffe. The cathedral, though begun by Bishop Losinga in 1094, was not finished till 1510.

WITHERED BLOSSOM.

IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER II.

LATE that night I went to look at the moonlight from the stone parapet that ran round the house. Belle was there already, staring straight out before her. She had on an old dark blue wrapper, and her uncoiled hair lay heavily upon it. I had never seen her look so moody, and she did not stir at my approach.

"Making out pictures, Belle?"

The water broke on the shingle with

silver foam; there was a barge with lights on it; a lull had dropped on the village.

"Yes," said Belle, shortly.

"What do you see?"

"Darkness," she replied, in the morbid, exaggerated style I especially disliked. As she spoke, the moon passed behind a cloud, and the lighted barge was hidden by a rock. A gloomy blackness had suddenly fallen.

Belle shivered.

"Who would be a prophet," she said, "with a future like that?"

I was so vexed with her mood, that I did not care to stay.

"Good-night, Belle," I said. "I don't think prophets are very much in my style. I can't see your visions, and, I am thankful to say, I don't dream your dreams."

After this Belle grew every day more fitful. One hour her eyes would be bright and her colour high, and the next, perhaps, it would have faded, and her face have relapsed into its usual pallor. I, who was watching her, found the clue. It depended a good deal on the new comer, Jack Curzon. Every day, as it passed, confirmed my idea, until at last it grew clear to every one. He was making love to Eunice.

Frogmore came to me in despair.

"I have been waiting too long," he said.

"Nothing that I could say now to Eunice would be of any use. She cares for him, and it is too late for me."

"They are not engaged?" I said, my voice alone making it a question.

"They soon will be," he returned, with a groan, and I was too much his friend to dispute it.

Eunice came to me, a changed character in her happiness.

"Dear, dear Devonshire," she said, "and this dear house. Mrs. F., if ever I have a house, it shall be nice like this. There shall be a hall with all those painted stones let in, and roses and geraniums in the fireplace, and, in the winter, scented fires; and I would have a grey soft furry shawl, and—it's all rather confused in my mind just now, but I would have the prettiest things."

"You little, foolish, vague girl," I said, "that is not half what I should have expected you to say. How will you ever be content with anything so perfectly ordinary? Could you not manage a running stream through your house, with the 'prettiest' flowers growing in the water, and little golden arrows all along it? This way to the blue room—to the guest's best chamber—to the larder! My dear, you will have nothing that is out of the way."

Eunice looked up, too shy to say what her eyes said for her:

"But—I shall have Jack."

Belle came to me with an endless headache, that I could not cure. She would sit by my couch in silence, watching Eunice and Curzon in the garden, till her eyes, I should have thought, would have been tired. I *could* not understand it. Our proud Belle to think of a man who did not care for her! And if he did not care for her, then why were his eyes always seeking her face? If he did care for her, then why make love to Eunice? I wearied myself to death with these questions.

Once, I remember, when Eunice had a headache that kept her in her room, and Curzon was in the garden, not looking up at her window, as is the wont of lovers, but smoking in a calm content, Belle went out to him.

"Am I disturbing you?" she asked; for at her approach he held his cigar in his hand.

Curzon looked at her steadily for some instants, and then, throwing away his cigar, turned and walked with her.

I had never seen silence so effective.

I became very anxious, and spoke to our hostess. He was the son of a clergyman; she had known him all her life. A flirt? Well, she had never thought so; she supposed he did admire the girls, but not one she thought more than the other. He was oftener with Eunice. Well, you know, Belle was peculiar, and men do not like oddity. His looking at her so much would be easily explained. She had expressions of face which rivetted the attention.

It was all true, and I was not satisfied.

One day, I was more than usually unwell, and did not leave my couch in the drawing-room window. Sunset coming round, found me there. Belle, who had petting ways with her when she chose, was lying curled up beside me, quiet and still, with her hand in mine. It was I, at last, who broke the long silence.

"Is Captain Frogmore with Eunice?"

"No, Mr. Curzon."

She spoke coldly, which was her way when she was pained, and I dropped the subject.

But there are some subjects that will not be dropped: this one revived within our hearing.

"No, I am not charming," said Eunice, contradicting. "For a great many people I should not be at all a good wife. I always see things so wretchedly black, and I am

so often unhappy; but, of course, I shall never be that when I am with you."

"My darling!" said Jack. Belle gave a little cry of pain.

I said some word to her as to the expediency of moving, but she held me fast.

"Hush!" she said, sharply. "I *will* listen."

"I never thought I should have a very happy life," Eunice went on. "I am so glad you love me, Jack. Belle and I were always sure we should know who were going to love us, the very first time we saw them. Belle always declared she should know."

"*Did* she?" said Jack, speaking almost as dreamily as the girls might have done.

I supposed he did not care very much to talk about Belle just then. Eunice evidently took it so.

"You must love Belle," she said. "She must come and stay with us. After you, there is no one I love like Belle, and no one understands her as I do. You do not know what Belle could be if she were only happier. There must be no more talk of governing and no fuss. Belle and I have had horrid lives, but it must be over now. From the day I marry she must never be unhappy again, and I—oh, Jack, Jack, the old life is dropping away. I do not believe in sorrow. I love you, Jack, I love you."

You may imagine it all. The hot broiling day, just gradually turning cool; the scents that rose upward from the red, rich earth; the golden bees on the scented flowers, and Eunice more beautiful than ever, with her curling lashes drooping on her clear grey eyes, and her colour rising as she yielded to his kiss. I glanced at Belle. Her face was grey and her eyes were leaden. She did not stay to be looked at, but escaped from the room.

Soon after this, I remember an evening, when we were all out together on the lawn, listening in the still twilight to Curzon, who was addressing himself to Eunice.

He was imagining situations, and asking her what she should do in them.

"Suppose," he said, "for instance, a man goes and falls in love with a girl who has no money, and—in brief, he leaves her for one who has. Should you say that fellow *could* have no good in him, no heart, that he never regretted what he had done?"

The gathering darkness came on apace, but I saw that while most of us gave him eager answers, Belle sat silent with trouble in her eyes.

"What do you think?" he asked, suddenly turning to her.

"That it is all very common," she said, clearly and distinctly; "that for aught we know, cases like that may be going on around us; that impossible as it would be, the girl who loved him might think he retained good through it all."

Belle, though she spoke clearly, did not raise her voice, and I do not know that her words reached any but Curzon and me.

Eunice's engagement was now an acknowledged thing. It came to be understood that when we all drove and rode out together, she and Jack should linger, or be always a little in advance. Eunice was kind-hearted, and too fond of her sister to like to take it for granted that she should never ride with them, and was continually calling her, so that poor Belle was always liable to catch some word that told her the never-ending subject of their talk. Thus, it was in one of these long Devonshire rides by the sea, that Eunice's happiness came to an end.

Our hostess and I were driving, but the riders were holding in their horses to walk, and so we kept all pretty well together.

Eunice had been more than usually happy, letting her words fall gaily on the still air, and on one suffocating heart. There was a tightening round Belle's heart, sobs rose in her throat, and a mist was before her eyes, as she rode rapidly on; on, on, away from their happy, heartless words. Her pretty figure no longer held straight up, her dark proud eyes, proud no more, but glittering and shining with tears, and the reins hanging loosely in her hands. There were great stones along the road, and Belle sat her horse so listlessly, that, unchecked by any restraining hand, he had already made several sharp swerving movements, that had each time nearly unseated her, without in the least awakening her from her dream. I called Curzon's attention to this, and he followed her instantly, his face set, and rigid with a fear that was not groundless. So completely had Belle lost consciousness of time and place, that what we were fearing came actually to pass.

In an instant, before he could reach her, there was a cry of "Jack!" The horse had thrown her, and before she could rise, his hoof had struck her as she lay.

I can hear Eunice's shriek as her sister fell. I can feel again the faintness of that moment. The world seemed breaking into

stars around me; I could scarcely see. She was not dead. I heard them saying it, with their voices sounding far off.

Ah! Belle, Belle, I could almost have wished that you were! Her arm was broken in the fall, and the horse, striking her, had done her some internal injury that made her recovery hopeless.

At such a time, outward sensations are not to be relied on. I doubt my senses, else I should think that Jack, bending over the white face, had kissed it, and cried:

"My first darling; my one love!"

If it were so, the words struck on my ear, and penetrated to my memory, without their sense entering my mind. Everything but fear seemed crushed out of me, even sorrow. I seemed to know nothing till Belle opened her eyes, and looked at us.

Then the flow of feeling returned, and I knew we had all lost something.

I took Belle into my own room, for she was frightened she said, when she woke at night, to find only the strange nurse watching her, and Eunice would get so hysterically excited, that at last she was forbidden to enter the room.

Down to the end, Belle's old dreams and visions kept her company. It was dreadful to hear her, for in her delirium, everything that she saw seemed to be broken.

"Oh!" she would say, "the room is full of broken, white wings. What shall I do?"

The old jealousy of Eunice and Jack haunted her like a half-forgotten thought.

She would begin to call to her sister, and then break off, while her eyes grew imploring and dark. One string of words I had never heard before; she said them over and over again:

"I did not know it was in me to love any one as I do you, Belle."

This passed. The fever wore itself out, and Belle woke cool and sensible, and made me call for Eunice.

Poor Eunice! When she came, she got up on the bed, and hid her face, that Belle might not see her eyes.

"Don't go, Mrs. F.," said Belle; "stay and listen. I have a story to tell you, Eunice. Will you hear it?" Eunice signified assent, without lifting her face.

"Hold me higher," said Belle; "I must see the waves. I don't suppose I *could* tell this story without them."

It was a rough sea, and there was a strong undercurrent that sent all the waves westward.

"It is a love-story," said Belle, "and so it will interest you, Eunice."

Eunice stirred with an instinctive knowledge of what was coming.

"It is rather commonplace, perhaps," Belle went on; "one of the characters is desperately so; just a stupid, happy girl, looking at the world across some red flowers, beyond which stood her lover. Ah! it was pretty, Eunice! The hedges were red in the evening glow, red streams of light ran down the hills upon the heather, and even the cattle seemed stained. I was so happy, dear! What your lover has said to you, more, much more, mine then said to me. I love the very dress I heard it in. Ah, me, me!"

"You never told me," whispered Eunice, great tears dropping from her eyes.

"What should I tell you? That, after this day, there arose something that chilled me, as cold and invisible as a wind? That, evening after evening, through the red light, the old sweet dream passed further away? He let it pass, as though it had never been, and ignored it all. He went away, without one more word, and I stood on the beach and watched the boat go. The waves receded from me, leaving the stones wet with what had been there. They seemed to be following him, I thought—going westward, as his boat had gone. There is no more, Eunice; you know his name."

"No, no, no!" cried Eunice. "Oh, dear Belle, say it was not he!"

"It was Jack," said Belle. And then there came on a great paroxysm of her old pain, and we were told she would probably not last out the night. Delirium took possession of her. She talked again of the broken, white wings, of her mother and Eunice, of the waves and Jack.

"Jack! Jack! Jack!" till one's heart ached at the sound.

We tried at last, bringing him to her. But it was too late then. She lay in a sort of trance, from which she never woke.

She died while the sea was still rough and the current strong; with the moonlight she had loved, shining on her face.

Jack saw her often thus. The dead girl lying so white and still, had recovered all her old power. The greatest beauty in the land could only keep her lover at her side, and through all the long hours poor Belle could do this. Jack, as he held her clasped in his arms, now loved her as vainly as she had loved him.

"I didn't know it was in me to love any one as I do you, Belle!"

So he moaned. It seemed to me that the dead girl spoke, and I knew, for certain now, who had said those words.

I had a long talk with Eunice, and explained to her Curzon's motives, and the mercenary spirit that had risen in his breast against love; but she knew it all now as well as I did, knew that the imaginary case he had put to her was his own, and never exchanged another word with him.

Later, Frogmore made his long-deferred proposal, but was not, to my sorrow, accepted. I left Devonshire after this, and the others scattered: Eunice going home to her father. Just before I left, she came and hung round my neck, smoothing my hair with her soft hands, and speaking in a pathetic voice.

"I shall never marry," she said. "Belle rises between me and Jack. And, besides, I know that he never loved me."

"But Captain Frogmore," I said, eager for her answer.

"Oh no, oh no!" cried she, and was still so crying when I left her.

Several years later, returning to England, after a long absence, I found a letter awaiting me from my Devonshire hostess, asking me again to her country-house.

"Eunice is here," she wrote, "and I know you will like to see her."

And truly, when I drove up the long avenue to the house, there was Eunice in the verandah, with her dark eyes shining as in the olden times. And a little, fearless child came running out at the door, putting up her arms to be taken in mine, and holding out her mouth to be kissed.

"What is your name, little darling?" I asked. "Whose dear little girl are you?"

"Mamma's little girl," said the little dark-eyed thing, "and papa's Pussy, and my name is Belle Frogmore."

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BOOK III.

CHAPTER XII. MARIAN'S RESOLVE.

To have an income of fifteen thousand a year, and to be her own mistress, would, one would have imagined, have placed Marian Creswell on the pinnacle of worldly success, and rendered her perfectly happy. In the wildest day-dreams of her youth she had never thought of attaining such an income, and such a position as that income afforded her. The pleasures of that position she had only just begun to appreciate; for the life at Woolgreaves, though with its domestic comforts, its carriages and horses and attentive servants, infinitely superior to the life in the Helmingham school-house, had no flavour of the outside world. Her place in her particular sphere was very much elevated, but that sphere was as circumscribed as ever. It was not until after her husband's death that Marian felt she had really come into her kingdom. The industrious gentlemen who publish in the newspapers extracts from the last wills and testaments of rich or distinguished persons, thereby planting a weekly dagger in the bosoms of the impecunious, who are led by a strange kind of fascination to read of the enormous sums gathered and bequeathed, had of course not overlooked the testamentary disposition of Mr. Creswell, "of Woolgreaves, and Charleycourt Mills, Brock-sopp, cotton-spinner and mill-owner," but had nobly placed him at the head of one of their weekly lists. So that when Mrs. Creswell "and suite," as they were good enough to describe her servants in the local papers, arrived at the great hotel at Tunbridge Wells, the functionaries of that

magnificent establishment—great creatures accustomed to associate with the salt of the earth, and having a proper contempt, which they do not suffer themselves to disguise, for the ordinary traveller—were fain to smile on her, and to give her such a welcome as only the knowledge of the extent to which they intended mulcting her in the bill could possibly have extorted from them. The same kindly feeling towards her animated all the sojourners in that pleasant watering-place. No sooner had her name appeared in the Strangers' List, no sooner had it been buzzed about that she was *the* Mrs. Creswell, whose husband had recently died, leaving her so wonderfully well off, than she became an object of intense popular interest.

Two ladies of title—the widow of a viscount (Irish), and the wife of a baronet (English), insolvent, and at that moment in exile in the island of Coll, there hiding from his creditors—left cards on her, and earnestly desired the pleasure of her acquaintance. The roistering youth of the place, the East India colonels, the gay dogs superannuated from the government offices, the retired business men, who, in the fallow leisure of their lives, did what they would—all looked on her with longing eyes, and set their wits to work on all sorts of schemes to compass knowing her. Over laymen the clergy have a great advantage, their mission is in itself sufficient introduction, and lists of all the local charities, district churches to be erected, parsonages to be repaired, and schools to be established, had been presented by those interested in them to the rich widow in person before she had been forty-eight hours in the place.

It was very pleasant, this popularity, this being sought after and courted and

made much of, and Marian enjoyed it thoroughly. Unquestionably, she had never enjoyed anything so much in her previous life, and her enjoyment had no alloy. For although just before her husband's death, and for some little time after, she had had certain twinges of conscience as to the part she had acted in leaving him ignorant of all her relations with Walter Joyce when she married him, that feeling had soon died away. Before leaving home she had had a *hazy* experience of absolute enjoyment in signing cheques with her own name, and in being consulted by Mr. Teesdale as to some business of her estate, and this feeling increased very much during her stay at Tunbridge Wells. Nevertheless, she did not remain there very long; she was pleased at being told that her duties required her at home, and she was by no means one to shirk such duties as the management of an enormous property involved.

So Marian Creswell went back to Woolgreaves, and busied herself in learning the details of her inheritance, in receiving from Mr. Teesdale an account of his past stewardship, and listening to his propositions for the future. It was very pleasant at first; there were so many figures, the amounts involved were so enormous; there were huge parchment deeds to look at, and actual painted maps of her estates. She had imagined that during that period just prior to their marriage, when she made herself useful to Mr. Creswell, she had acquired some notion of his wealth, but she now found she had not heard of a tenth part of it. There was a slate quarry in Wales, a brewery in Leamington, interest in Australian ships, liens on Indian railways, and house property in London. There seemed no end to the wealth, and for the first few weeks, looking at the details of it with her own eyes, or listening to the account of it in Mr. Teesdale's sonorous voice, afforded her real pleasure. Then gradually, and almost imperceptibly, came back upon her that feeling which had overwhelmed her in her husband's lifetime, of which she had gotten rid for some little space, but which now returned with fifty-fold force, "What is the good of it all?"

What indeed? She sat in the midst of her possessions more lonely than the poorest cottor on any of her estates, less cared for than the worn-out miner, for whom, after his day's toil, his wife prepared the evening meal, and his children huddled at his knee. Formerly her husband had

been there, with his kindly face and his soft voice, and she had known that, notwithstanding all difference of age and temperament between them, so long as he lived there was one to love her with a devotion which is the lot of few in this world. Now he was gone, and she was alone. Alone! It was a maddening thought to a woman of Marian's condition, without the consolation of religion, without the patience calmly to accept her fate, without the power of bowing to the inevitable. Where money was concerned she could hardly bring herself to recognise the inevitable, could scarcely understand that people of her wealth should, against their own will, be left alone in this world, and that love, friendship, and all their sweet associations, could not be bought.

Love and friendship! Of the latter she could scarcely be said to have had any experience; for Marian Ashurst was not a girl who made friends, and Mrs. Creswell found no one equal to being admitted to such a bond; and as to the former, though she had enjoyed it once, she had almost forgotten all about it. It came back to her, however, as she thought over it; all the sweet words, the soft endearing epithets, and the loving looks came back to her; all the fond memory of that time when, for a period, the demon of avarice was stilled, the gnawing desire for money, and what money in her idea might bring, was quenched; when she was honestly proud of her lover, happy in the present, and expectant of the future. She recollected the poor dresses and the cheap trinkets which she had in those days; the wretched little presents which she and Walter had exchanged, and the pleasure she experienced at receiving them at his hands. She remembered the locket, with her portrait, which she had given him, and wondered what had become of it. He had it, doubtless, still, for he had never returned it to her, not even in that first wild access of rage which he may have felt at the receipt of the letter announcing her intended marriage, nor since, when he had cooled down into comparative carelessness. Surely that argued something in her favour? Surely that showed that he had yet some lingering regard for her? In all that had been told her of him, and specially during the election time she had heard much, no mention had ever been made of any woman to whom he was paying attention. She had thought of that before; she remembered it delightedly now. Could it be that in the secret re-

cesses of his heart there glimmered yet, unquenched, a spark of love for her, the idol of his youth? It was not unlikely, she thought; he was very romantic, as she remembered him, just the sort of man in whom commerce with the world would be insufficient to blot out early impressions, to efface cherished ideals.

Could it be possible that the great crisis in her life was yet to come? That the opportunity was yet to be given her of having wealth and position, and, to share them with her, a husband whom she could love, and of whom she could be proud? Her happiness seemed almost too great; and yet it was there on the cards before her. Forgetting all she had done, and shutting her eyes to the fact that she herself had made an enormous gulf between them, she blindly argued to herself that it was impossible such love as Walter Joyce's for her could ever be wholly eradicated, that some spark of its former fire must yet remain in its ashes, and needed but tact and opportunity on her part to fan it again into a flame. What would not life be, then, were that accomplished? She had been pleased with the notion of entering society as Mr. Creswell's wife (poor, prosaic Mr. Creswell!), but as the wife of Walter Joyce, who was, according to Mr. Gould, one of the most rising men of the day, and who would have her fortune at his back to further his schemes and advance his interests, what might not be done! Marian glowed with delight at this ecstatic day-dream; sat cherishing it for hours, thinking over all kinds of combinations; finally put it aside with the full determination to take some steps towards seeing Walter Joyce at once.

How lucky it was, she thought, that she had behaved amiably on the announcement of Gertrude Creswell's marriage, and not, as she had felt inclined at first to do, returned a savage, or at best a formal, answer! These people, these Benthalls, were just those through whose agency her designs must be carried out. They were very friendly with Walter, and of course saw something of him; indeed, she had heard that he was expected down to stay at Helmingham, so soon as he could get away from London. If she played her cards well—not too openly at first, but with circumspection—she might make good use of these people; and as they would not be too well off, even with the interest of Gertrude's money, if they had a family (and this sort of people, poor parsons and schoolmasters—James Ashurst's

daughter had already learned to speak in that way—always had a large number of children) she might be able, in time, to buy their services and mould them to her will.

It was under the influence of such feelings that Marian had determined on being exceedingly polite to the Benthalls, and she regretted very much that she had been away from home when they called on her. She wrote a note to that effect to Mrs. Benthall, and intimated her intention of returning the visit almost immediately. Mrs. Benthall showed the note to her husband, who read it and lifted his eyebrows, and asked his wife what it meant, and why the widow had suddenly become so remarkably attached to them. Mrs. Benthall professed her inability to answer his question, but remarked that it was a good thing that "that" was all settled between Maud and Walter, before Walter came in madam's way again.

"But he isn't likely to come in her way again," said the Reverend George.

"I don't know that," said Gerty; "this sudden friendship for us looks to me very much as though——"

"You don't mean to say you think Mrs. Creswell intends making a convenience of us?" asked Mr. Benthall.

"I think she did so intend," said Gertrude; "but she——"

"We'll have nothing of that sort!" cried Mr. Benthall, going through that process which is known as "flaring-up;" "we can get on well enough without her, and her presents, and if——"

"Ah, you silly thing," interrupted Gertrude, "don't you see that when Walter marries Maud, there will be an end of any use to which we could be put by Mrs. Creswell, even if we were not going away to the Newmanton living in a very few weeks? You may depend upon it, that as soon as she hears the news—and I will take care to let her know it when she calls here—she will gracefully retire, and during the remainder of our stay in Helmingham we shall see very little more of the rich widow."

On the night of his acceptance by Maud Creswell, Walter wrote a long letter to Lady Caroline. He wrote it in his room, the old room in which he used to sleep in his usher days, when all the household was in bed, after an evening passed by him in earnest conversation with Maud and Gertrude, while Mr. Benthall busied

himself with an arrangement of affairs consequent upon his giving up the school, which he had decided upon doing at Midsummer. In the course of that long conversation Walter mentioned that he was about to write to Lady Caroline, acquainting her with what had taken place, and also told the girls of his having consulted her previous to the step which he had taken. He thought this information, as showing Lady Caroline's approbation of the match, would be hailed with great delight; and he was surprised to see a look pass between Maud and Gertrude, and to hear the latter say:

"O Walter, you don't mean to say you asked Lady Caroline's advice as to your marrying Maud?"

"Certainly I did; and I am sure Maud will see nothing strange in it. She knows perfectly well that——"

"It is not for Maud's sake that I spoke; but—but, Walter, had you no idea, no suspicion that——"

"That what, my dear Gertrude? Pray finish your sentence."

"That Lady Caroline cared for you herself?"

"Cared for me!"

"Cared for you! loved you! wanted to marry you! Can I find plainer language than that?"

"Good heavens, child, what nonsense are you talking! There is not the remotest foundation for any such belief. Lady Caroline is my kindest and best friend. If there were no social difference between us, I should say she had behaved to me as a sister; but as for anything else—nonsense, Gertrude!"

Gertrude said no more; she merely shrugged her shoulders, and changed the subject. But the effect of that conversation was not lost on Walter Joyce. It showed in the tone of his letter to Lady Caroline written that night, softening it and removing it entirely from the brusque and business-like style of correspondence which he generally indulged in.

The next day he left Helmingham early, having had a stroll with Maud—in which he expressed his wish that the marriage should take place as soon as possible—and a short talk with Gertrude, in which, however, he made no reference to the topic discussed on the previous evening.

It was a lucky thing that Mr. Joyce had started by an early train; for the Benthalls had scarcely finished their luncheon, *before there was a violent ringing at the*

gate-bell—there was no servant in the county who, for his size, could make more noise than Marian's tiger—and Mrs. Creswell was announced. She had driven the ponies slowly over from Woolgreaves, and had been enjoying the bows and adulation of the villagers as she came along. Though of course she had driven through the village scores of times, she had never been to the schoolhouse since she left it with her mother on their memorable visit to Woolgreaves, that visit which resulted in her marriage.

Mrs. Creswell was not an emotional woman; but her heart beat rather faster than was its placid wont as she crossed the threshold of the gate, and stepped at once into the garden, where so many of the scenes of her early history had been passed. There was the lawn, as untidy as in her poor father's days, bordered by the big elm-trees, under whose shadow she had walked in the dull summer evenings, as the hum from the dormitories settled down into silence and slumber; and her lover was free to join her there, and to walk with her until their frugal supper was announced. There were the queer star- and pear-shaped flower-beds, the Virginia-creeper waving in feathery elegance along the high wall, the other side of which was put to far more practical purposes: bore stucco instead of climbers, and re-echoed to the balls of the fives players. There were the narrow walks, the old paintless gate-bell, that lived behind iron bars, the hideous stone pine-apples on either side of the door, just as she remembered them.

In the drawing-room, too, where she was received by Mrs. Benthall, with the exception of a smell of stale tobacco, there was no difference: the old paper on the walls, the old furniture, the old dreary out-look.

After the first round of visiting-talk, Marian asked Gertrude how she liked her new home.

Gerty was, if anything, frank.

"Well, I like it pretty well," she said. "Of course it's all new to me, and the boys are great fun."

"Are they?" said Marian, with an odd smile; "they must have changed a great deal. I know I didn't think them 'great fun' in my day."

"Well, I mean for a little time. Of course they'd bore one awfully very soon; and I think this place would bore one frightfully after a time, so dull and grim, isn't it?"

"It's very quiet; but you mustn't let it bore you, as you call it."

"O, that won't matter much, because it will only be for so short a time."

"So short a time! Are you going to leave Helmingham?"

"O yes; haven't you heard? George has got a living, such a jolly place, they say, in the Isle of Wight, Newmanton they call it; and we give up here at Midsummer."

"I congratulate you, my dear Gertrude, as much as I bewail my own misfortune. I was looking forward with such pleasure to having you within reachable distance in this horribly unneighbourly neighbourhood, and now you dash all my hopes! Whence did Mr. Benthall get this singular piece of good fortune?"

"George got the presentation from Lord Hetherington, who is a friend of Wal—I mean of a great friend of ours. And Lord Hetherington had seen George in London, and had taken a fancy to him, as so many people do; and he begged his friend to offer this living to George."

"That is very delightful indeed; I must congratulate you, though I must say I deserve a medal for my unselfishness in doing so. It will be charming for your sister, too; she never liked this part of the country much, I think; and of course she will live with you?"

"No, not live with us; we shall see her whenever she can get away from London, I hope."

"From London! ah, I forgot. Of course she will make your friend Lady—Man—Lady Mansergh's her head-quarters?"

"No; you are not right yet, Mrs. Creswell," said Gertrude, smiling in great delight, and showing all her teeth. "The fact is, Maud is going to be married, and after her marriage she will live the greater part of the year in London."

"To be married! indeed!" said Marian—she always hated Maud much more than Gertrude. "May one ask to whom?"

"Oh, certainly; every one will know it now;—to the new member here, Mr. Joyce."

"Indeed!" said Marian, quite calmly (trust her for that). "I should think they would be excellently matched! My dear Gertrude, how on earth do you get these flowers to grow in a room? Mine are all blighted, the merest brown horrors."

"Would he prefer that pale spiritless girl—not spiritless, but missish, knowing nothing of the world and its ways—to a

woman who could stand by his side in an emergency, and help him throughout his life? Am I to be for ever finding one or other of these doll-children in my way? Shall I give up this last, greatest hope, simply because of this preposterous obstacle? Invention too, perhaps, of the other girl's, to annoy me. Walter is not that style of man—last person on earth to fancy a bread-and-butter miss, who— We will see who shall win this time. This is an excitement which I certainly had not expected."

And the ponies never went so fast before.

NIGHT ON THE MINCH.

"SHE is a poor thing, a bit toy!" said the skipper of the Lowland trader, regarding the little yacht Tern from the deck of his big vessel, while we lay in Canna Harbour: "She's no' for these seas at all; and the quicker ye are awa' hame wi' her round the Rhu, ye'll be the wiser. She should never hae quitted the Clyde."

Set by the side of the trader's great hull, she certainly did look a "toy": so tiny, so slight, with her tapering mast and slender spars. To all our enumeration of her good qualities, the skipper merely replied with an incredulous "oomph," and assured us that, were she as "good as gold," the waters of the Minch would drown her like a rat if there was any wind at all. Few yachts of thrice her tonnage, and twice her beam, ever cared to show their sails on the outside of Skye. Why, even the skipper, in his great vessel, which was like a rock in the water, had seen such weather out there as had made his hair stand on end; and he launched into a series of awful tales, showing how he had driven from the point of Sleat to Isle Ornsay up to his neck in the sea, how a squall off Dunvegan Head had carried away his topmast, broken his mainsail boom, and swept his decks clean of boats and rubbish, all at one fell crash; and numberless other terrific things, all tending to show that we were likely to get into trouble. When he heard that we actually purposed crossing the Minch to Boisdale, and beating up along the shores of the Long Isle as far as Stornoway, he set us down as madmen at once, and condescended to no more advice. After that, till the moment we sailed, he regarded us from the side of his vessel in a solemn sort of way, as if we were people going to be hanged.

He frightened us a little. The Wanderer, who had planned the expedition, looked at the skipper—or the Viking, as we got in the habit of calling him, because he wasn't like one. The Viking, who had never before ventured with his yacht beyond the Clyde, was pale, and only wanted encouragement.

to turn and fly. But Hamish Shaw, the pilot, setting his lips together, delivered himself so violently against flight, vowed so staunchly that having come thus far we must proceed, or be for evermore branded as pretenders, and finally swore so roundly by his reputation as a seaman to carry us safely through all perils, that even the Viking shook his horrent locks and became for the instant nearly as courageous as he looked. "Nothing," said the Viking, in a glow of reckless ardour, "nothing gives me so much pleasure as tearing through it, with the wind blowing half a gale, and the boat's side buried to the cockpit coaming."

We had all great confidence in Hamish Shaw, for two very good reasons; firstly, because he had long been accustomed to sailing all sorts of boats in these waters; and secondly, because he was steady as a rock, and cool as snow in times of peril. Again and again, during the voyage, did we find reason to bless ourselves that we had such a man on board. He was fond of talk, and had much to say well worth listening to, but at critical moments he was like the sphinx—only rather more active. To see him at the helm, with his eye on the waves, steadily helping the little craft through a tempestuous sea, bringing her bow up to the billows, and burying it in them whenever they would have drowned her broadside; or sharply watching the water to windward, with the mainsail sheet in his hand, shaking her through the squalls off a mountainous coast—these were things worth seeing, things that made one proud of the race. As for the Viking, though he had considerable experience in sailing in smooth water, and though he was a very handy fellow in the ship's carpenter line, he was nowhere when it began to blow. He had been subject to palpitation of the heart for many years, and it always troubled him most when he was most wanted: making him very pale, feeble, and fluttering. He took a great deal of whisky to cure his complaint, but it had merely the effect of exciting him without relieving his unfortunate symptoms. The Wanderer could do a little in an emergency, but his nautical knowledge was very slight, just enabling him to distinguish one rope from another if he were not particularly hurried in his movements. The cook was a lady, and of course could be of no use on deck in bad weather: though, as Hamish Shaw expressed it, she showed a man's spirit throughout the voyage.

In plain point of fact, there was only one sailor on board; and as he had only one pair of hands, and could not be everywhere at the same moment, it was a miracle that the Tern escaped destruction.

As the distance from Canna to Loch Boisdale, the nearest point in the outer Hebrides, was about thirty miles, all quite open water, without the chance of any kind of harbour, and as the Tern, even with a fair wind, could not be expected to run more than six miles an hour in a sea, it was advisable to choose a very good

day indeed for the passage. As usual in such cases, we began by being over-cautious, and ended by being over-impatient. This day was too calm, and that day was too windy. We ended by doing two things which we had commenced by religiously avowing not to do—that is to say, never to start for a long passage except at early morning, and never to venture on such a passage without a fair wind. We weighed anchor at about two o'clock in the afternoon, with the wind blowing north-west—nearly dead in our teeth.

But it was a glorious day, sunny and cheerful; the clouds were high and white, and the waters were sparkling and flashing, far as the eye could see. As soon as the wind touched the white wings of the little Tern, she slipped out of the harbour with rapid flight, plunged splashing out at the harbour mouth, and was soon swimming far out in the midst of the spray, happy, eager, tilting the waves from her breast like a swimmer in his strength. Next to the rapturous enjoyment of having wings oneself, or being able to sport among the waves like a great northern diver, is the pleasure of sailing during such weather in a boat like the Tern.

Canna never looked more beautiful than to-day—her cliffs wreathed into wondrous forms and tinted with deep ocean dyes, and the slopes above rich and mellow in the light. But what most fascinates the eye is the southern coast of Skye, lying on the starboard bow as we are beating northward. The Isle of Mist is clear to-day, not a vapour lingers on the heights; and although it must be admitted that much of its strange and eerie beauty is lost, still we have a certain gentle loveliness in its place. Can that be Skye, the deep coast full of rich warm under-shadow, the softly-tinted hills, "nakedly visible without a cloud," sleeping against the "dim sweet harebell-colour" of the heavens? Where is the thunder-cloud, where are the weeping shadows of the cirrus, where are the white flashes of cataracts through the black smoke of rain on the mountain-side? Are these the Cuchullins—the ashen-grey heights turning to solid amber at the peaks, the dry seams of the torrents softening in the sunlight to golden shades? Why, Blaavin, with hooked forehead, would be bare as Primrose Hill, save for one slight white wreath of vapour, that, glittering with the hues of the prism, floats gently away, to die in the delicate blue. Dark are the headlands, yet warmly dark, projecting into the sparkling sea and casting summer shades. Skye is indeed transformed, yet its beauty is still spiritual, still it keeps the faint feeling of the glamour. It looks like witch-beauty, wondrous and unreal. You feel that an instant may change it, and so it may and will. Ere we have sailed many miles more, Skye will be clouded over with a misty woe, her face will be black and wild, she will sob in the midst of the darkness with the voice of falling rain and eerie winds.

We were flying along swiftly, and the breeze was heading us less and less. The sea still

as the eye could see, a flashing

ppld o'er with shadows slung
any a brooding cloud :

ite cloud above, the soft shadow
re was no danger, and the Viking
on. All went merry as a marriage
re after picture rose up, grew into
liness, and faded like a fairy palace

Now it was Macleod's Maidens, the
eaks on the western coast of Skye,
er by a dim rainbow, and glimmer-
7 through a momentary shower;
the far-off mouth of Loch Braca-
ith the darkest purple tints, with a
d fishing-boat in the foreground to
picture, just as Turner would have
the canvas ; and still again, it was
ne, already wreathed in mist, mag-
l more gigantic size by their own
d looking as forlorn as if no sun-
er fallen on their hoary brows.

frequently, with keener interest,
ixious longing, our eyes were turned
o the far-off isles whither we were
could see them better now, misted
ance—part of the Barra highland,
eat hills of Uist, and, dimmest of
h hills of Harris. As the vapours
the coast, the shape of the land
What had looked like mountains
before the wind ; what had seemed
ined itself darkly and more darkly ;
e to say, the whole coast seemed,
nearer, to retreat further away,
at when we had beaten ten or
s of the actual distance to Loch
outer Hebrides looked as distant
we almost thought there must have
mistake in our calculation of the
iles across.

strange feeling, riding out there in
uch in that little boat, and know-
orm, if it *did* catch us there, would
le time to say our prayers. The
oo small and crank to lie to, and
fore the wind she would have
rself in no time. True, we had
l a kind of wooden scuttle for the
ch might be of some service in a
actually save us from some peril ;
was, the boat, as Hamish Shaw
wanted "body," and would never
l weather in the open. It was a
ish ever accompanied us at all—
a profound contempt for the Tern,
g with the skipper in Canna that
ely a toy, a plaything. We sup-
er, that he had confidence in him-
ew that if any one could save her
e could.

arted so late, that before we were
ross, as was growing quite dark.
to be a good night, however. The
situation just then, was, that the
eginning to fail, and we were
little way through the rough roll

One certainly did not feel quite comfortable,
tumbling out there in the deepening twilight,
while the land on either side slowly mingled
itself with the clouds. After taking our bear-
ings by the compass, and getting a drop of
something warm, we could do nothing but sit
and wait for events. The Viking was begin-
ning to feel unwell with his old complaint. Shi-
vering he looked to windward, seeing all sorts
of nameless horrors. Twenty times, at least,
he asked Hamish what sort of a night it
promised to be? Twice he rushed down to
examine the weather-glass, an aneroid, and, to
his horror, it was slowly sinking. Then he
got lights and buried himself among the charts,
feebly gazing at a blank space of paper labelled
"The Minch." At last, unable to disguise it
any longer, he began to throw out dark hints
that we were doomed ; that it was madness
sailing at night ; that he had seen it from the
beginning, and should not have ventured so far ;
that he knew from the colour of the sky that
we should have a storm in the night ; and that,
only let him get safe back "round the Rhu,"
no temptation on earth should tempt him again
beyond the Crinan Canal.

It is to be feared that Hamish Shaw was
rather short with the Viking, and attributed
his trepidation to ignoble causes. Hamish
Shaw was in his glory. He loved sailing at
night, and had been constantly urging us to
it. He had learned the habit as a fisherman,
it was associated with much that was wildest
and noblest in his life, and he was firmly
persuaded that he could see his way anywhere
in the waters, by dark as well as by day.
Owl-like, wakeful and vigilant, he sat at the
helm, with his weather-beaten face looming
through his matted ringlets, his black pipe set
between his teeth, and his eyes looking keenly
to windward. He was not a sentimental man :
he did not care much for "scenery." But do
you think there was no dreamy poetry in his
soul ; that he had no subtle pleasure, concealed
almost from himself, as the heaven bared its
glittering breast of stars, and the water that
darkened beneath, glimmered back the light,
and the wind fell softly, till we could hear the
deep breathing of the sea itself? What me-
mories drifted across his brain ; of wild nights
at the herring-fishing, of rain, snow, and
wind ; of tender nights in his highland home,
when he went courting in highland fashion to
the lassie's chamber-door! He is a strange
study, Hamish Shaw. To hear him speak
directly of any scene he has visited, you would
not credit him with any insight. But he sees
more than he knows. His life is too full to take
in separate effects, or wonder anew. What
light he throws for us on old thoughts and
superstitions, on tender affections of the race!
His speech is full of water and wind. He uses
a fine phrase, as naturally as nature fashions a
bud or a leaf. He speaks in natural symbols,
as freely as he uses an oar. His clear fresh
vision penetrates even into the moral world,
quite open and fearless even there, where the
best of us become purblind.

We have tried again and again, for our own amusement, to reproduce a little of Shaw's English. He is a true Gael, and is speaking a foreign tongue, acquired in early youth. His language is at once remarkable for its obscurity and the use of big words, and yet for a strange felicity of verbal touch. He attaches a certain meaning to words, and tries hard to be explicit. For example, speaking once of the Gaelic, and becoming warm in its praise: "the Gaelic," he said, "is a kind of guttural language, a principal and positive language; a language, d'ye see, *full of knowledge and essence*." It would be difficult to find anything obscurer than the beginning of the explanation, or more felicitous than its conclusion. The one word "*essence*" is perfect in its terse expression of meaning.

"I'm of the opinion," said Hamish, quietly surveying the heavens, "that the night will be good. Yon's a clear sky to windward, and there's nae kerry. I would a heap sooner sail a craft like this by night than by day, the weather is mair settled between gloaming and sunrise; and you have one great advantage: the light is aye gaining on ye, instead o' the darkness."

"But Shaw, man," cried the Viking, "we are creeping closer and closer to the land, and it will be a fearful business making it out in the mirk!"

Shaw shrugged his shoulders.

"If we canna see it, we maun just smell it," he said. "It's useless to fash your head."

"A coast sown with rocks as thick as if they had been shaken out of a pepper-box! Reefs here, danger everywhere! And not a beacon nearer than Rhu Hunish lighthouse! O my God!"

And the Viking wailed.

By this time the summer night had quite closed in; Canna and Skye had long faded out of sight behind, but we could still make out the form of the land ahead. The wind was rising again, and blowing gently on our quarter, so we bade fair to make the coast of the Long Island sooner than was advisable. Still, it would have been injudicious to remain any longer than was necessary out in the open; for a storm might come on by morning, and seal our fate. The best plan was to creep to within a couple of miles of the land, and hang about until we had sufficient daylight to make out our situation. It was even possible, if it did not grow much darker, that we might be able to make out the mouth of Loch Boisdale in the night.

The Viking plunged below to the charts. To while away the time, the Wanderer began talking to the steersman about superstition. It was a fine eerie situation for a talk on that subject, and the still summer night, with the deep dreary murmur of the sea, gathered powerfully on the imagination.

"Hamish," said the Wanderer, abruptly, "do you believe in ghosts?"

Hamish puffed his pipe leisurely for some time before replying.

"I'm of the opinion," he replied at last, beginning with the expression habitual to him—"I'm of the opinion that there's strange things in the world. I never saw a ghost, and I don't expect to see one. If the Scripture says true—I mean the Scripture, no' the ministers—there has been ghosts seen before, and there may be now. The folk used to say there was a Ben-shee in Skipness Castle, a Ben-shee with white hair and a much like an old wife, and my father saw it with his own een before he died. They're curious people over in Barra, and they believe stranger things than that."

"In witchcraft, perhaps?"

"There's more than them believes in witchcraft. When I was a young man on board the Petrel (she's one of Middleton's fish-boats and is over at Howth now) the winds were that wild, that there seemed sma' chance of winning hame before the new year. Weel, the skipper was a Skye man, and had great faith in an auld wife who lived alone up on the hillside; and without speaking a word to any o' us, he went up to bid wi' her for a fair wind. He crossed her hand wi' siller, and she told him to bury a live cat wi' its head to the airt wanted, and then to steal a spoon from some house, and get awa'. He buried the cat, and he stole the spoon. It's curious, but sure as ye live, the wind changed that night into the north-west, and never shifted till the Petrel was in Tobermory."

"Once let me be the hero of an affair like that," cried the Wanderer, "and I'll believe in the devil for ever after. But it was a queer process."

"The ways o' God are droll," returned Shaw, seriously. "Some say that in old times the witches made a causeway o' whales from Rhu Hunish to Dunvegan Head. There are auld wives o'er yonder yet, who hae the name of going out wi' the deil every night, in the shape o' blue hares, and I kenned a man who thought he shot one wi' a siller button. I dinna believe all I hear, but I dinna just disbelieve either. Ye've heard of the Evil Eye?"

"Certainly."

"When we were in Canna, I noticed a fine cow and calf standing by a house near the kirkyard, and I said to the wife as I passed (she was syning her pails at the door), 'Yon's a bonnie bit calf ye hae with the auld cow.' 'Aye,' says she, 'but I hope ye didna look at them o'er keen'—meaning, ye ken, that maybe I had the Evil Eye. I laughed and told her that was a thing ne'er belong't to me nor mine. That minds me of an auld wife near Loch Boisdale, who had a terrible bad name for killing kye and doing mischief on corn. She was glead,* and had black hair. One day, when the folk were in kirk, she reached o'er her hand to a bairn that was lying beside her, and touched its cheek wi' her finger. Weel, that moment the bairn (it was a lassie and had red hair) began greeting and turning its head from side to side like folk in fever. It kept on

* She squinted.

nae for days. But at last anither woman, who saw what was wrang, recommended eight poultices o' kyeahairn (one every night) from the innermost kye i' the byre. They gied her the poultices, and the lassie got weel."

"That was as strange a remedy as the buried cat," observed the Wanderer; "but I did not know such people possessed the power of casting the trouble on human beings."

Hamish puffed his pipe, and looked quietly at the sky. It was some minutes before he spoke again.

"There was a witch family," he said at last, "in Loch Carron, where I was born and reared. They lived their lane close to the sea. There were three o' them—the mither, a son, and a daughter. The mither had great lumps all o'er her arms, and sae had the daughter; but the son was a clean-hided lad, and he was the cleverest. Folk said he had the power o' healing the sick, but only in ae way, by transferring the disease to him that brought the message seeking help. Ance, I mind, a man was sent till him on horseback, bidding him come and heal a fisher who was up on the hill and like to dee. The warlock mounted his pony, and said to the man, 'Draw back a bit, and let me ride before ye.' The man, kenning nae better, let him pass, and followed ahint. They had to pass through a glen, and in the middle of the glen an auld wife was standing at her door. When she saw the messenger riding ahint the warlock, she screeched out to him as loud as she could cry: 'Ride, ride, and reach the sick lad first, or ye're a dead man!' At that, the warlock looked black as thunder, and galloped his pony; but the messenger being better mounted, o'ertook him fast, and got first to the sick man's bedside. In the night the sick man died. Ye see, the warlock had nae power o' shifting the complaint but on him that brought the message, and no' on him if the warlock didna reach the house before the messenger."

Here the Viking emerged with the whisky-bottle, and Hamish Shaw wet his lips. We were gliding gently along now, and the hills of Uist were still dimly visible. The deep roll of the sea would have been disagreeable, perhaps, to the uninitiated, but we were hardened. While the Viking sat by, gazing gloomily into the darkness, the Wanderer pursued his chat with Shaw, or, rather, incited the latter to further soliloquies.

"Do you know, Hamish," he said, slyly, "it seems to me very queer that Providence should suffer such pranks to be played, and should entrust such marvellous power to such wretched hands. Come, now; do you actually fancy that these things have happened?"

But Hamish Shaw was not the man to commit himself. He was a philosopher.

"I'm of the opinion," he replied, "that it would be wrong to be o'er positive. Providence does as queer things, whiles, as either man or woman. There was a strange cry, like the whistle of a bird, heard every nicht close to the cottage before Wattie Macleod's smack was

lost on St. John's Point, and Wattie and his son were drowned; then it stoppit. Whiles it comes like a sheep crying, whiles like the sound o' pipes. I heard it mysel' when my brither Angus died. He had been awa' o'er the country and his horse had fallen, and kickit him on the navel. But before he heard a word about it, the wife and I were on the road to Angus's house, and were coming near the burn that parted his house from mine. It was nicht, and bright moonlicht. The wife was heavy at the time, and suddenly she grippit me by the arm and whispered, 'Wheesht! do ye hear?' I listened, and at first I heard nothing, 'Wheesht, again!' says she; and then I heard it plain—like the low blowing o' the bagpipes, slowly and sadly, wi' nae tune. 'O, Hamish,' said the wife, 'wha can it be?' I said nae-thing, but I felt my back all cold, and a sharp thread running through my heart. It followed us along us far as Angus's door, and then it went awa'. Angus was sitting by the fire; they had just brought him hame; and he told us o' the fall and the kick. He was pale, but didna think much was wrang wi' him, and talked quite cheerful and loud. The wife was sick and frightened, and they gave her a dram; they thought it was her trouble, for her time was near, but she was thinking o' the sign we had heard. Though we knew fine that Angus wouldna live, we didna dare to speak o' what we had heard. Going hame that nicht, we heard it again, and in a week he was lying in his grave."

The darkness, the hushed breathing of the sea, the sough of the wind through the rigging, greatly deepened the effect of this tale. The Viking listened intently, as if he expected every moment to hear a similar sound presaging his own doom. Hamish Shaw showed no emotion. He told his tale as mere matter-of-fact, with no elocutionary effects, and kept his eye to windward all the time, literally looking out for squalls.

"For heaven's sake," cried the Viking "choose some other subject of conversation. We are in bad enough plight already, and don't want any more horrors."

"What! Afraid of ghosts?"

"No, dash it!" returned the Viking; "but—but—as sure as I live, there's storm in yon sky!"

The look of the sky to windward was not improving; it was becoming smoked over with thick mist. Though we were now only a few miles off the Uist coast, the loom of the land was scarcely visible; the vapours peculiar to such coasts seemed rising and gradually wrapping everything in their folds. Still, as far as we could make out from the stars, there was no carry in the sky.

"I'll no' say," observed Hamish, taking in everything at a glance; "I'll no' say but there may be wind ere morning; but it will be wind off the shore, and we hae the hills for shelter."

"But the squalls! The squalls!" cried the Viking.

"The land is no' that high that ye need to be scared. Leave you the vessel to me, and I'll tak' her through it snug. But we may as weel hae the third reef in the mainsail, and mak' things ready in case o' need."

This was soon done. The mainsail was reefed, and the second jib substituted for the large one; after a glance at the compass, Hamish again sat quiet at the helm.

"Barra," he said, renewing our late subject of talk, "is a great place for superstation, and aye is Uist. The folk are like weans, simply and kindly. There is a Ben-shee weel-ken'd at the head o' Loch Eynort, and anither haunts one o' the auld castles o' the great Macneil o' Barra. I hae heard, too, that whiles big snakes wi' manes like horses come up into the fresh-water lakes and lie in wait to devour the flesh o' man. In a fresh-water loch at the Harris, there was a big beast like a bull, that came up ae day and ate half the body o' a lad when he was bathing. They tried to drain the loch to get at the beast, but there was o'er muckle water. Then they baited a great hook wi' the half o' a sheep, but the beast was o'er wise to bite. Lord, it was a droll fishing! They're a curious people. But doe ye no' think, if the sea and the lochs were drainit dry, there would be all manner o' strange animals that nae man kens the name o'? There's a kind of water-world. Nae man kens what it's like—for the drowned canna see, and if they could see, they couldna speak. Aye!" he added, suddenly changing the current of his thoughts, "aye! the wind's rising, and we're no' far off the shore, for I can smell the land."

By what keenness of sense Hamish managed to "smell the land," we had no time just then to inquire; for all our wits were employed in looking after the safety of the Tern. She was bowling along under three-reefed mainsail and storm-jib, and was getting just about as much as she could bear. With the rail under to the cockpit, the water lapping heavily against the coaming, and ever and anon splashing right over in the cockpit itself, she made her way fast through the rising sea. In vain we strained our eyes to see the shore:

The blinding mist came down and hid the land,
As far as eye could see!

All at once, the foggy vapours peculiar to the country had steeped everything in darkness; we could guess from the wind where the land lay, but were at a loss to tell how near. What with the whistling wind, the darkness, the surging sea, we felt bewildered and amazed.

The Wanderer looked at his watch, and it was past midnight. Even if the fog cleared off, it would not be safe to take Loch Boisdale without good light, and there was nothing for it but to beat about till sunrise. This was a prospect not at all comfortable, for we might even then be in the neighbourhood of dangerous rocks, and, if the wind rose any higher, there was nothing for it but running before the wind, God knew whither. Meantime, it was determined to stand off a little to the open, in dread

of coming to over-close quarters with the shore.

Hamish sat at the helm, stern and imperturbable. We knew by his silence that he was anxious, but he expressed no anxiety whatever. Ever and anon he slipped down his hand on the deck to leeward, feeling how near the water was to the cockpit, and, as there seemed considerable danger of foundering in the heavy sea, he speedily agreed with us that it would be wise to close over the cockpit hatches. That done, all was done that hands could do, save holding the boat with the helm steady and close to the wind—a task which Hamish fulfilled to perfection. Indeed, we were in no slight danger from squalls, for the wind was off the land, and nothing saved us, when struck by heavy gusts, but the firmness and skill of the helmsman. He had talked about smelling the land, but it is certain that he seemed to smell the wind. Almost before a squall touched her, the Tern was standing up to it, tight and firm, when ever so slight a falling off might have stricken us over to the mast, and perhaps (for the cockpit hatches were a small protection) foundered us in the open sea.

The Viking was a wreck by this time, too weak even to scream out his prophecies of doom, but lying anticipating his fate in his fore-castle hammock, with the grog at his side and his eyes closed despairingly against all the terrors of the scene. The cook was lying in the cabin, very sick, in that happy frame of mind when it is indifferent whether we float on, or go to the bottom. The Wanderer, drenched through, clung close beside the pilot, and strained his eyes against wind and salt spray into the darkness. It would be false to say that he felt comfortable, but as false to say that he felt frightened. Though dreadfully excitable by nature, he was of too sanguine a temperament to be overpowered by half-seen perils. On the whole, though the situation was precarious, he had by no means made up his mind to be drowned; and there was something so stimulating in the brave conduct of the little ship, which seemed to be fighting out the battle on her own account, that at times he was light-hearted enough to sing out, loud, a verse of his favourite Tom Bowling. No man, however, could have sat there in the darkness, amid the rush of wind and wave, without at times thinking of the power of God; so again and again, through the Wanderer's mind, with a deep sea-music of their own, rolled the wondrous verses of the Psalm: "They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters. They see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep. For He commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths; their soul is melted because of trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and He bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they

glad because they be quiet, so He bringeth them unto their destined haven. O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!"

It was now so dark that we could see nothing on any side of us, save the glitter of the crests of the waves playing close to us, and the phosphorescent glimmer of the beaten water behind the rudder. The wind was pretty steady, and the squalls were not too frequent. We were running through the darkness at considerable speed, burying our bowsprit in every wave, and washing our decks as clean as salt water could make them. So low was the Tern's rail, and so close to the sea, even on the weather side, that it was like being dragged through the water bodily, with the chilly waves lapping round the waist.

Suddenly, out of the darkness ahead, shot a sharp glimmer of light; then, there was a loud sound like the creaking of cordage and noise of sails; and then, before we could utter a cry, a large brig dashed across our bows, running with a free sheet before the wind. Ghostly and strange she looked, in the mist, driving at tremendous speed, and churning the sea to sparkling foam. With a loud oath, Hamish shoved the helm hard a-port, and brought the head of the Tern up to the wind, so that we almost brushed the strange vessel's quarter. We had narrowly escaped death. With fascinated eyes we watched the brig dash on, until she was swallowed up in the darkness. When she was quite gone, we drew a heavy breath of relief.

"Lord, that was a close shave for life!" muttered Shaw, drawing his cuff across his mouth: his manner when agitated. "Who would hae thought o' meeting strange craft hereabouts? We'd maybe better rig out the mast-head lantern, in case o' mair accidents."

This was soon done, and although the lantern burnt blue and dim, we felt more secure. After so narrow an escape, what reasonable creature could have refused to drink his own health in the water of life? The grog bottle was passed round, and never was a "nip of the screech" received with more affectionate unction.

It was weary work, that waiting on in the darkness. The wind sang, the water sobbed, the sail moaned, until the Wanderer began to get sleepier and sleepier. At last, wet as he was, he sank off into a doze, wherein he was half conscious of the boat's motion through the water, and half dreaming of things far away. Suddenly, he was startled by a roar in his ear, and rubbing his eyes wildly, listened. It was only Hamish Shaw, saying quietly:

"It's beginning to get licht. I see the loom o' the land."

Shivering like a half-drowned rat in the cold damp air of the dawn, and dashing the wet hair out of his weary eyes, the Wanderer stared all round him, and saw (when his obfuscated wits were able to concentrate themselves) that it was nearly daybreak, though all was dark above. A dim, silvern, misty glimmer was on the sea, and about two miles to the westward

the land lay black in a dark mist like the smoke nearest the funnel of a newly-coaled steamer. The Viking was poking his head through the cabin hatch and gazing shoreward.

"Can ye mak' out the shape o' these hills?" he asked of the pilot. "Loch Boisdale should be hereabouts."

Hamish shook his head.

"We maun creep in closer to mak' certain," he replied. "It's o'er dark yet. Yon bit place yonder, where ye see a shimmer like the gleam o' herring-scales, looks like the mouth o' the loch, but we maun creep in canny and get mair licht."

Although Shaw had been herring-fishing on the coast for so many years, he was not as familiar with it as might have been expected. He knew its general outline, but had not made close observation of details. With the indifference peculiar to the fishers, he had generally trusted to Providence and his own sagacity, without making any mental note of his experiences. So it was not until we had twice or thrice referred to the chart, that he remembered that just south of Boisdale, about half a mile from shore, there was a dangerous reef called Mackenzie Rock, and that on this rock there was a red buoy, which, if descried in the dim light, would be a certain index to the whereabouts of the mouth of the loch.

"Tam Saunders put the Wild Duck on that rock when I was up here in the Gannet," said Hamish; "but she was as strong as iron, different frae this wee bit shell o' a thing, and they keepit her fixit there till the flood, and then floated her off wi' scarce a scratch. We'll just put her about, and creep in shore on the other tack."

Though the day was slowly breaking, it was still very misty, and a thin cold "smurr" was beginning to creep down on the sea. The wind was still sharp and strong, the sea was high, and the squalls were dangerous; but we knew now that the worst of our perils must be over. As we approached closer to the shore, we noticed one dark bluff, or headland, from which the land receded on either side, leaving it darkly prominent; a reference to the chart soon convinced us that this headland was no other than the Ru Hordag, which lies a few miles to the south of Boisdale. So we put about again, and slipped up along the land, lying very close to the wind. It was soon clear that the dawn, though it had fully broken, was not going to favour us with a brilliant exhibition, nor to dispel the dangerous vapours in which the land was shrouded. The whole shape of the land was distorted. One could merely conjecture where land ended, and mist began; all was confusion. No sun came out—only the dull glimmer through the miserable "smurr" betokened that it was day.

Suddenly, with a shriek of joy, the Viking discovered the buoy, and pointed it out through the rain. Yes, there it was, a red spot in a circle of white foam, about a quarter of a mile on the weather quarter. With this assistance, it was decided that the spot which Shaw had

compared to the "gleam of herring-scales" was indeed the mouth of the loch. Never did voyagers hail the sight of haven with greater joy.

It was a run of nearly a mile up to the anchorage, and the passage was by no means a safe one; but Hamish, once in the loch, knew every stone and shallow perfectly. When we cast anchor, the thin "smurr" had changed into a heavy rain, and all the scene around was black and wild. But what cared we? The fire was lighted in the forecastle, Hamish put on the kettle, and the kettle began to sing. Then, after putting on dry clothes, we sat down as merry as crickets. The cook recovered, and poached the eggs. The Wanderer dozed smilingly in a corner. The Viking swore roundly that it had been the "jolliest night" he had ever spent, and that such nights made him in love with sailing. Hamish Shaw, to whom all the glory of the night belonged, first lit his black cutty pipe as he rested his head against the side of the forecastle; and then, in an instant, dropped off heavy as a log, worn out with fatigue, and still gripping the cutty firmly between his teeth as he slept.

AN OLD BALLAD RENEWED.

THE princess she was a winsome thing,
Only seventeen years that spring.

She said to her love, "I fain would see
Your pack of hounds loose on the lea.

"Saddle thy horse and gird thee, Brand,
And we will ride to a friendlier land."

"Lady fair, I've no steed but one;
But thou shalt ride and I will run."

"Earl Brand, my father has horses three:
More than enough for you and me."

So away they gallopped o'er moss and moor
And these lovers met neither rich nor poor

They never slackened for sun or rain
On the hill-side, or over the plain.

Fox might bark, or the wild hawk scream,
Life with them was a summer dream.

Till at last they met, at the side of a wood,
With one who was evil and never good.

"Earl Brand," said the maiden, "if ye love me,
Slay that traitor, or he'll slay thee."

"I cannot slay him, my lady fair,
For bent is his back, and grey his hair."

"Why, sir knight, in such haste to ride,
And where have you stolen that bonny bride?"

"She is my sister, and not my wife,
And I fear me much for the maiden's life."

"If she is weary, and all but dead,
Why does she wear that hood of red?"

"If she's been sick and like to die,
Why do I gold and jewels spy?"

He ran back fast to her kith and kin,
And beat at the door till they let him in.

"Now where is the lady of this hall?"

"Out at play with the cowslip ball."

"No!" he cried, "you are all mista'en;
Go count your maidens o'er again.

"I met her but now in headlong flight
With young Earl Brand, the English knight."

Her father he mounted with fifteen men,
And rode swift down the mountain glen.

The lady looked back, as the stream they ford,
And cried, "Ride faster, or draw your sword."

"If they come on me one by one,
You must stand by till the fight be done;

"But if they charge on me one and all,
You must stand by and see me fall."

Then one by one they on him ran,
And fourteen times he slew his man:

Ten of the rascals dead by the burn,
Four rogues dead on the trampled fern;

Then the fifteenth traitor stealing round,
Gave him a deep and deadly wound.

The knight of his wound took little heed,
And set his lady upon her steed.

They rode till they came to the brimming tide,
And there he bound his bleeding side.

"O, Earl, I see your red heart's blood!"

"Nay, 'tis but the gleam of your scarlet hood."

They rode till he came to his mother's door,
Then he fell dead on the chamber floor.

THE GREAT DRUNKERY DISCOVERY.

Not long ago, the mighty Head of the Honourable Court of Aldermen of the City of London, and, for aught we know, even of that terrible Assembly, The (very) Common Council, authoritatively made, at the Mansion House, from that judgment seat which the magnificent potentate occupies in virtue of being what it is the facetious custom to call the chief magistrate of this great city, the remarkable statement: That Recreation was a special cause of crime. The wise experience of the civic sovereign, prompted him to this great utterance.

The close observation and accurate knowledge on which this dictum is founded, are beyond praise. Leaving out of the question the small consideration that a people without recreation might be rather difficult to govern, and might (so History teaches common men who are not Lord Mayors) in fact have an avenging tendency to turn and rend their governors, consider how exquisitely timed this Pearl of the nineteenth century! Among the younger men of the day, what demoralising sports, what brutal pastimes, are fostered and encouraged by the degrading system of early closing, and by the Saturday half-holiday! Take the wicked and cruel game of cricket, for instance, in which it is notoriously impossible to attain excellence without defiance of rule and order, and the habitual consumption of large quantities of strong drink. Consider the rowing matches, of which large numbers take place on Saturday afternoons, if the tide be favourable;

and the training for which, by the very nature of the case, requires uproarious conduct, late hours, the constant imbibition of ardent spirits, and a systematic shattering of the constitution. Think with disgust of the orgies that take place at the rifle butts, where marksman's badges and bulls'-eyes can never be attained unless the hand shakes with the palsy consequent upon excessive drinking. As for drilling, it is so well known that military precision is impossible to be reached, without the faltering gait and general bearing of *delirium tremens*, that it is needless to dwell upon the unpleasant topic.

The popularity of these enervating and dissipated pursuits may account for the evil doings of the foul fiend, Recreation. So may the abominable custom of running cheap excursion trains: particularly now, when railway refreshment-rooms are improving. So may the disgraceful facilities afforded for intoxication by the system of afternoon performances at places of public entertainment: where, let us by all means declare, the major part of the audience—or say the whole, while we *are* about it—is invariably dead drunk.

The Lord Mayor on Recreation is but the old platform principle, on the Mansion House Bench. Some people alloy recreation; no people shall enjoy recreation. Some people misuse Everything; no people shall enjoy Anything.

Lord Mayors, unlike Poets, are made: not born. And before you can be a Lord Mayor, O aspiring Reader, you must be an Alderman. Yet take heart. Though only an Alderman, you *may*, if born under a lucky star, be as wise as a Lord Mayor. There is actually an Alderman as wise as a Lord Mayor, in the present House of Commons. Think of it!

MR. LAYARD, the First Commissioner of Works, whose government of the public Parks is influenced by a sound common sense, and a responsible anxiety for the comfort and enjoyment of their frequenters, worthy of such a man, was engaged a few weeks ago in carrying the estimates of his department through committee of supply, when "MR. ALDERMAN LUSK objected," says the *Times*' report, "to the licensing of a place for the sale of beer in Victoria Park. He objected to the sale of beer in any park. It was offensive to Tee-Totallers to set up a DRUNKERY in the middle of a park. He was not a Tee-Totaller, but he sympathised with those who were, and he did not want needlessly to give them offence. It did

not become Parliament to set up a beer-shop in the middle of a park, and therefore he protested against it."

As far as we know, Drunkery is a new, as well as an elegant, addition to the English language. It is a forcible word too. A suggestive word besides. The Alderman objects to setting up a Drunkery in the middle of a park. As though one should object to setting up a Hee-Hawery or a Gruntery, in the middle of the House of Commons. We suppose the noun-substantive, Drunkery, to mean a low kind of public-house frequented by persons for the purpose of getting drunk. Mr. Layard, knowing that a minister getting his Estimates through, is set up—not to write it irreverently—like an Aunt Sally, to be shyed at, and that he must take all the sticks that are set a flying at him, did not evade even this poor stick. He condescended to explain that he was not going to set up a Drunkery, but merely to provide sober refreshment for sober people. He endeavoured to hammer into the Aldermanic head that the state of things so much deprecated had for years existed in this very Victoria Park, and in Battersea Park: although in tents on the cricket-fields, and not in brick and mortar Drunkeries. Of course the Alderman was ignorant of the facts, and the vote passed, after he had, as above, released his mighty mind.

Is it generally known in Finsbury, which returns Mr. Alderman Lusk, that there is such a place as the South Kensington Museum? Have his meek constituents heard that there is in that building, which is frequented at all times by vast numbers of sight-seers, many of whom are of that working class which one of our Finsbury M.P.'s affects to think much of at election time, but which he calumniously mistrusts, when elected, a most appalling Drunkery? Do they know, down in Finsbury, that besides the dinners which can be procured there, beer and wine are sold, and not only beer and wine, but spirits? And do they know that the people do NOT get drunk there, do NOT destroy the art-treasures of the place, and do, on the whole—as they do on the whole everywhere—behave themselves almost as well as the Court of Common Council? If so, will they do themselves the justice to point this out to their shining light?

What do they say, down in Finsbury, to that enormous and pestilent Drunkery known as the Crystal Palace, at Sydenham? Did they ever attend that build-

ing on a popular day when the shilling public was on hand? Let some Finsbury voters inquire of the officers of the establishment, and they will find that although the visitors have the privilege of obtaining as much beer as they like, they are not in the habit of leaving Messrs. Bertram and Roberts's counter and running amuck down the centre transept, or getting up fights in the Nineveh court, like Drury-lane ruffians in a gin-shop bar.

Will they ask the worthy Alderman, down in Finsbury, distinctly by what moral right he stigmatises a well-regulated place for the sale of beer in a park, as a Drunkery? Will they ask him by what other word he will describe the favourite places we have instanced, and twenty more of a similar kind for the recreation of decent people grossly libelled, all over and about London?

In this Journal, and in its predecessor, a conscientious and consistent stand has always been made against the monstrous extravagance and injustice of the Tee-Totalism that persists in attacking and defaming those who use and do not abuse. In our knowledge of the darker ways of great cities we yield to few men living, if any. Of the miseries and vices that accompany drunkenness—sometimes its causes, sometimes its effects—we have seen woful sights. We should be hopeless, alike of a drunken servant and a drunken son. If either were disposed to take the Tee-Total pledge, we would urge him to take it, as a last trial. But we protest, and always will protest while life remains to us, against the restraining of the moderate by the immoderate, against the domination of the virtuous by the vicious. If a hundred thousand people such as ourselves were to become Tee-Totallers to-morrow, our reason is convinced that every slave to drink would still remain in slavery. In the last hundred years, in the last fifty years, in the last quarter of a century, drunkenness has steadily decreased. Judging by all reasonable analogy, it will, in the next hundred years, in the next fifty, in the next twenty-five, yet steadily decrease, though more rapidly. By all means let all drunkards who can be got to take the pledge and to keep it, take it and keep it. Meanwhile, let the sober people alone. And take well to heart the truth that nothing will eradicate the black sediment of drunkenness deposited by poverty, misery, and ignorance, save a gradual awakening of self-respect in low depths, through a wise and beneficent system pervading all legislation.

But, to return to the Alderman returned

by Finsbury. His nature is so delicate, it seems, that "though he is not a Tee-Totaller he sympathises with those who are," and he "does not want needlessly to give *THEM* offence"! Is there any logic down in Finsbury? Some voters who profess Tee-Totalism, there evidently are; but is there any aldermanically-damaging fragment of logic among those who are not? Are we sober people, and our wives, and our children, and our neighbours and friends, to submit to be charged with frequenting a Drunkery, because we choose to take a pint of beer in Victoria Park? Are our characters to be blackened by the imputation of a shameful vice, and are the comfort and convenience of us the vast majority to be as nothing? A pint of beer in Victoria Park may be a stumbling-block to somebody who doesn't want it, and who won't have it; and therefore everybody who does want it, shall go without it! Cigars may be sold in Victoria Park. Let us have no Smokery there, or we may give offence to the Anti-Tobacco League! Chops may be announced in Victoria Park. Let no Flesh-eatery be established there, or we shall never be voted for by a member of the Vegetarian Society! Is everything to be forbidden everywhere that is offensive to somebody? Why, some day it might strike some members of the House of Commons that the presence in that assembly of some Alderman, might be offensive to some persons in Finsbury!

The combination of the Victoria Park Drunkery, and the great Recreation theory, suggested to us the expediency of a Saturday visit to Victoria Park. Firstly, for the reason that though we had seen many Saturday half-holidays, our way had not lain in a north-easterly direction; and, secondly, because we were anxious to see the Drunkery, and the stroke of business done in it. So, on the Saturday succeeding the brilliant parliamentary achievement of Finsbury's Anointed, we proceeded thither.

There was no doubt, anywhere on our road, about its being a holiday. Everybody had a general look of being cleaned up for the afternoon, and little hand-baskets were being carried to the railway stations leading suburb-ward, by many excursionists. An eruption of flannel cricketing trousers had broken out on the knifeboards of the omnibuses. Volunteers, in uniform of all hues and cuts, were hurrying toward all points of the compass, to drill. Shops were being shut up in all directions. But even under these circumstances the public-houses

were not unusually full, and there was no sign of that sad, sad, increase of drunkenness. We presently emerged into the Hackney-road, and became satisfied, owing to the number of cricketers all moving in one direction, that Hackney-road must be our right road. Presently, passing over a pretty bridge across an ugly canal, we were in the scene of the Drunkenery—the Park.

The first impressions of Victoria Park are not striking. It is large and rather barren. Dismal and mangy tracts of land surround it, belonging (as we afterwards found) to the Woods and Forests, and to be let for building purposes. Not attractive to builders, however, as it would seem. The sun was very hot, and there was a deal of dust, and the north-east wind was sharp. On further acquaintance, Victoria Park improves. Closer inspection discerns pleasant gardens, and shady shrubberies laid out with taste, and kept with great neatness. Wherever a seat can be put under the shade of a tree, there a seat will be found; wherever there is a chance for a pleasant little resting place among the green shrubs, there such a resting place is contrived. It cannot be said that the gardens of Victoria Park are equal to those of Hyde Park; but they are very pretty, for all that, and no doubt give as much pleasure to their visitors. On holidays, it is fashionable to visit Victoria Park, in numbers quite extraordinary. Nor is it found, though the great mass of the visitors is of the poorer class, and though the park is surrounded by public-houses, that this leads to any particularly disorderly conduct, or that the people are less careful of the shrubs and flowers, here, than elsewhere. The park—or at least the ornamental portion—is not very full, however, this Saturday afternoon. Monday, or even Tuesday, is a greater day than Saturday. The old custom of keeping St. Monday has not, in these parts, yet been quite superseded by the more modern and more humanising institution of St. Saturday. Still, there is a very respectable number of half-holiday makers, who show no outward signs of that evil condition, which, according to the Lord Mayor, should be normal to them.

Turning a corner, we came unexpectedly upon a pretty scene: new to us, although something like it may be seen on the Serpentine. A long lake, or piece of ornamental water, covered with the glancing white sails of model yachts, its banks covered by an eager busy crowd of north-east London yachtsmen. From the little

boat sold at the conventional toy-shop, and which capsizes with singular readiness, up to the complete model, six feet or more in length, which makes its way along as if it were smartly handled by pigmy mariners, every sort of boat is to be seen on this miniature Southampton water. Artful arrangements of tillers enable the larger models to sail where they will, and even, assisted by cunning sticks on shore, to go about when the land is too nearly made. The latest fashions in sails may here be seen. Fashionable square topsails, spin-nakers, balloon jibs, and what not; and, like their larger sisters of the rivers and seas, some of these little vessels carry a Mont Blanc of canvas, to a Chamounix-châlet of hull. As we watch the proprietors tenderly setting the sails of their little craft, anxiously adjusting the tillers, proudly launching their humble Cambrias and Julias, or eagerly, with long stick in hand, following their course down the lake, it strikes us that this is surely an innocent amusement, and one not specially calculated to lead to an im-moderate consumption of strong drink.

Further on, and past Miss Burdett Coutts's beautiful drinking fountain, which appears highly popular, is an arid waste and a stony. Here, swings and roundabouts are set up, somewhat—O name it not in Finsbury!—after the manner of a Fair, and giddiness is dispensed to those who like it at so much a whirl. Business is slack to-day, however.

If the half-holiday makers be not discoverable in great numbers anywhere else, there are plenty of them on the cricket-ground, which is absolutely covered with players. Balls fly about in a showery manner terrifying to the nervous or short-sighted spectator; and the cries of "Thank you, sir!" "Ball, please!" and the like, would do honour to the Playing Fields at Eton, or Parker's Piece at Cambridge, on a busy day. Sixteen matches go on here simultaneously, on Saturday afternoons: regular matches, be it understood, without reference to scratch games and desultory practice. He must be a wise batsman in Victoria Park who knows his own ball; and, if he be so minded, a man fielding may catch (irrespective of the immediate interests of his side) as many balls as Ramo Samee. As we make our way cautiously, along a ridge or high ground that divides this battle-field, we have just time to note that the taste in flannel shirts and caps is florid in this part of the world, combinations of scarlet and light blue being most in

favour, when—O Heaven and Finsbury!—we come upon a Drunkery! Here is absolutely a tent, unblushingly holding itself out to mankind as The Morpeth Castle:—too obviously an offshoot of the Morpeth Castle Tavern, which is to be observed defiantly flying its flag outside the park yonder! Beer is being consumed here: not only by cricketers, but by spectators, and the feelings of Tee-Total players are in course of being outraged frightfully. Yet somehow nobody gets drunk. Do we not know on the best authority that these people *ought* to do what they ought not to do? Say, Finsbury! And yet, Finsbury, they don't, and they won't.

But a canvas Drunkery is not what we seek. Our more substantial Drunkery must be sought elsewhere.

At the other end of the park is a lake, studded with small islands, on whose placid waters the athletic youth of the neighbourhood pursue the sport of rowing. It is a tranquil spot, pleasantly shaded with trees, and made as much of as possible by the landscape gardener's art; so that, though in reality but a pond, it seems a lake of fair proportions. On its otherwise virtuous banks, is the Drunkery. It looks a modest building enough, and is a very, a very, little Drunkery. At present it has not arrived at any distinct position in the world, inasmuch as it has been made the subject of a small trade "dodge." A licence cannot be granted to its lessee until it has been rated for the relief of the poor. The local vestry—whether inspired by a regard for the feelings of Tee-Totallers, or, which is much more likely, the interests of the publicans near the park—has refused the application for assessment, and so, for the moment, private interests stand in the way of a public accommodation.

If the exterior of this Drunkery be inoffensive, its interior is even more so. It is quite clear that bar drinking is not the object here. There is a sufficiency of chairs, and little tables (doubtless considered un-English by the neighbouring publicans), and there can be no doubt of the correctness of Mr. Layard's declaration that the place is intended for the rational entertainment of respectable people. The guarantees for the proper conduct of the place, and for the due observance of the First Commissioner's regulations, are two; one, is the power that the Commissioner possesses of turning out the lessee if any improprieties be permitted; the other, is the well-known respectability of the existing lessee: who has filled most

of the chief offices of the Licensed Victuallers' Society, and against whom even the opponents of the Drunkery have not a word to say.

On the other side of the water is a sort of arcade, now devoted to the sale, by the wife of a park constable, of ginger beer, biscuits, nuts, and similar mild articles. Even this humble refreshment-room has been objected to by the landlord of a public-house at the park gates, as injurious to his business! (Notice, Finsbury, how needful it is that the little model yacht, The Alderman, on the lake yonder, should trim its sails and manage its tiller so as to keep off both shores!)

Mr. Layard will be too strong in the long run for the disinterested opponents he has had to encounter. The combination of publicans and saints is novel; but, as the temper of the House of Commons was clearly with him, and not with Finsbury, so the common sense and the sense of justice of the public will be with him too.

To the Tee-Totallers (of whom the shining light of Finsbury is not one, though so keenly considerate of their feelings) we commend, in conclusion, without loss of temper, a passage from an Address, very famous in America, of GOVERNOR ANDREW, of the State of Massachusetts:

"Do you tell me that these arguments have a tendency indirectly to encourage and defend useless and harmful drinking, and that silence would have been better—for the sake of a great and holy cause?"

"Do you suppose that the people of every class and persuasion—taught by professors and practitioners of medical science of every school to take wines and beer as tonics, and restoratives, and as part of their diet, in illness, in age, or on occasions of physical depression—will, in their hearts, believe your declaration that they are essentially and characteristically poisonous? Do you think that the children at our firesides will believe that the Apostle was a perverter when, instead of commanding *total abstinence*, he enjoined *freedom from excess* of wine? Do you imagine they will forget, that he who made the best wine which the guests enjoyed at the marriage feast in Galilee (because He came 'eating and drinking' while John the Baptist was a Nazarite and drank no wine) was aspersed by the Jewish Pharisees as a 'wine-bibber and a friend of publicans and sinners'?"

"The people and the children are not blind to the inconsistencies and sophistries

of those who claim to lead them. They can distinguish the truths of the Gospel, and the practical dictates of Reason, from the controversial theories of 'contentious conscientiousness.'"

ORIENTAL LIFE IN LITTLE.

THOSE who remember the dark poking rooms at the India House in Leadenhall-street, and the curious things which rendered those rooms interesting, will be glad to learn that our old friend the Tiger is still in preservation, although much dimmed by the dust of time. We have still the incentive to meditate on that glittering savage, Tippoo Sultan, to whom the tiger belonged; and we may, if we like, ask whether a later savage, Nana Sahib, would have felt an equal pleasure in listening to the mimic shrieks of a wooden or papier-maché Englishman (or woman, or child). But this tiger is only one thing among a thousand; although certainly a very special thing of its kind.

During the couple of centuries marked by the career of the East India Company, and especially during the second of the two centuries, many odds and ends collected in the East were transmitted to London, and there placed in spare rooms in the old East India House—now replaced by a cluster of commercial chambers. When there was enough of these miscellaneous objects to merit the dignified name of a Museum, an order from a director of the company would admit a visitor to see it; but at a later date a more liberal plan was adopted, by admitting the public generally for three hours on Saturdays. You entered the central vestibule; you wound about two or three passages, and ascended forty stairs; and then you found six or eight rooms, very scantily supplied with window-light. In these rooms the curiosities were stowed, some in very dark corners, and some on shelves too high up to be seen; but there was wherewithal to whet one's interest in the doings and the products of the East. In process of time came the Mutiny, and its consequent fierce encounters; then the virtual extinction of the great company; next desolation of the old East India House; and the final demolition of the building. The removal of the Museum being necessary, an arrangement was made with the government for the use of Fife House, Whitehall; and there the Museum was open to the public for about seven years. Towards the close of what may be called the Leadenhall period, the directors had increased the number of hours in the year when the collection was open for public inspection, to four hours in the day on two days in the week; and when the transference to a new house was completed, the facility was further increased to six hours a day on three days in the week. Then came the building of the new India Office: a sort of twin brother of the new Foreign Office. In this new India Office, some, at least, of the contents of the Museum are now deposited.

And here we will give expression to a bundle of hopes. We hope that the staircase, mounting up to infinite altitude, and about as broad as that of an ordinary eight-roomed house, is only a temporary one. We hope that the present exhibited collection is only to be regarded as an instalment of that which will be placed open to us one day, when the stores possessed by the India Department shall have been made fully available. We hope that Dr. Forbes Watson, the indefatigable curator of the Museum, will be able to supply a few more labels or inscriptions, in the absence of a catalogue. We hope that the time for public admission will be something more than three hours on one day in the week. And we hope that the formality of giving one's card to the door-keeper is not to be insisted on. Many symptoms lead us to believe that the architect was not originally instructed to include a Museum in his plan; that the Museum was an after thought; and that the restrictive, exclusive system which has been adopted, is a result of cramping for room, arising from this want of architectural fitness.* Be this as it may, the arrangements will probably improve as they gradually get into working order; in the mean time we may congratulate all concerned on the capital manner in which the place is lighted; everything can be well seen.

This Museum illustrates, more completely than the British or the South Kensington Museums can do, the habits and customs, the arts and sciences, the growths and products, the utilities and luxuries, of Oriental countries. Take the case of warlike arms. Every possible scimitar and dagger that could have been used by Blue Beard and by Timour the Tartar, by rajahs and nabobs, by shahs and moguls, by Sikhs and Rajpoots, by Afghans and Scindians, may here be seen. Also, the oddest-looking muskets and matchlocks, some of them decorated with that peculiar kind of wavy surface known by the name of damascening. It would be an interesting point for our Snider and Whitworth folks to ascertain how far the two guiding principles of barrel-rifling and breech-loading have been known to the ingenious Orientals; and how far the same Orientals have studied the differences between steel and other metals as the material for various kinds of arms.

The fibrous products of India have engaged a large amount of attention on the part of Dr. Royle and Dr. Forbes Watson. The subject is an important one, seeing that the manufacturers of textile materials, of paper, of bagging and sacking, of ropes and matting, are greatly dependent on the supply of such fibres. The official precincts of Downing-

* Our hopes are likely to be realised in due time. It is now announced that the Council of India has authorised the architect to prepare plans for a new structure; to contain the whole collection belonging to the Museum, as well as a geographical department. The new building is to occupy another side of the quadrangle.

street illustrate some only of the collected stores which are available; but we believe that Dr. Forbes Watson is laudably endeavouring to get these fibres well known in the manufacturing districts: a mode of really benefitting both India and England. The same may be said of the drugs, oils, dyes, tanning materials, and vegetable foods, of the East; the more they are known in this country, the more probability there is that the industrious Hindu will "see the colour" of English money, and feel the benefit of English manufactures. This is, indeed, the department to which the greatest additions have been made by the India authorities during the last dozen years or so; and although the exhibited contents of the Museum comprise only a per-centage of the whole store, there are materials for many a useful lesson there. Nor is the animal kingdom neglected; the hair, wool, fur, feathers, skins, hides, vellum, horn, bone, silk, &c., of Oriental animals are variously illustrated.

But to see the Hindu at home is perhaps the most instructive part of the Museum; to see him surrounded by the material requisite for his daily existence. In regard to his trade or employment, we find models of looms, ploughs, mills, smiths' bellows, windlasses, pestles and mortars. In his travelling appliances we find the gorgeous howdah, the lazy palanquin, the dak postchaise, and the rude cart. In his culinary and table arrangements, very marvels of simplicity, we have the hand-mill with which the women grind the corn; the pans for parching the grain, and the rice; the dough-trough for making the cakes; the suspended crock for the boilings and steamings; the bits of skewers that serve as a substitute for the roasting-jack; the vessels for drinking, which must be used exclusively by their owners, under pain of loss of caste by pollution from other lips. The little models, constructed by Hindu fingers, are especially valuable as illustrations of this kind, seeing that they represent at once the people and the implements. The tailor is shown, exactly as he sits while making or mending a garment; the shoemaker has his own traditional mode of using a lapstone; the bricklayer, plasterer, mason, carpenter, and smith, are shown with their house-building tools and implements; the painter, glazier, plumber, gilder, decorator, are duly present; the quarryman, brickmaker, sower, reaper, ploughman, irrigator; the makers and users of all sorts of things; are here to be seen in great variety. The family groups, too, include models of women wrapped up in their clothing in an odd way, children with no clothing at all, and babies packed and strapped into oblong bundles without power of using a limb, poor little wretches! One group of models represents a native court of appeal, the contending litigants, the counsel, the witnesses, the judge, the clerks, the police, and the public: wonderfully like Westminster Hall, in spirit, if not in outward form. Another is a very gorgeous affair, an Indian prince

being entertained with a nautch or dance; the prince, courtiers, dancing girls, musicians, hookahs, refreshment trays, dresses, cushions, curtains, all are as glittering as gold and colour and embroidery can make them.

The musical instruments brought from the East are in many cases very curious, showing peculiar modes of applying the same principles as those with which we are all familiar. One consists of about three octaves of sounding sticks, flattish pieces of hard wood from ten to fifteen inches in length; they are ranged along a double string, with the surfaces horizontal, and emit a dullish, wooden sound when struck with a cork hammer. Yes, Master Bonnay's *Xylophone* was long ago anticipated in the East, but in a primitive way which that young performer would by no means have recognised. The monotonous tom-tom is here, in its glory of tinsel and tinkling appendages, ready to be tapped by the nimble fingers of the Hindu. The wind instruments and stringed instruments, of whatever forms they may be, impress one with the idea that the national music for which they are suited, must be of a very primitive and undeveloped kind; and this, indeed, we know to be the case: rhythm, melody, and harmony, all being deficient.

The costume of the natives of India, from the rajah to the pariah, can here be studied with great completeness. The kind of spun fibres employed, the kind of stuff woven from the fibres, and the shape of the garment. The study can best be carried on by means of several splendid volumes of photographs and specimens, prepared at the cost of the India Department, by Dr. Forbes Watson; but even without these, there is wherewithal at the Museum to excite the interest of our spinners, weavers, tailors, and dressmakers. We find, for instance, that a large proportion of India clothing is made entirely in the loom: that is, not merely the material, but the garment itself is made by weaving, without the aid of the scissors or needle. Among these loom-made garments are the pugaree or turban, made of a quadrangular piece of woven material, twisted up in an almost infinite number of ways; the loonghie or body-garment, a kind of long shawl wound round in even a greater number of ways than the turban; the dhotee, a sort of loin-cloth, sometimes the only covering except the turban, of the poorest class of natives; the cummer-bund or waist-band, a very long strip about a foot wide, and wrapped around the person as voluminously as the wearer may choose; the pitambus, a sort of silken dhotee worn by the Brahmins when at meals; the saree, a shawl so large as to serve a Hindu woman for shawl, head-dress, and even petticoat, according to the way in which it is thrown around the person; the booka, an enormous veil worn instead of the saree, with holes for the eyes to peep through. If we wish to know the infinite capabilities of a quadrangular piece of cloth as a garment, we may learn something from the Scotch plaid, and something from the Spanish mantilla, but very much more

from the Hindu pugaree, loonghie, and saree. Some of the sarees are nine yards long, by a yard and a half wide. Of course there are other garments made up with the aid of the scissors and needle, such as the taj or small conical cap; the col, or cap with a knob at the top; the topee, or large and elegant state cap; the long calico coat; the paejama, or trousers for both sexes; the cholee, or closely-fitting bodice; the peeskwas or skirt. It is also interesting to note the extent to which the native dyers and weavers and calico printers, have been able to produce pattern, by means of stripes, checks, spots, twills, chintz - glazing, embroidery, and fringe work. As to muslins, it is marvellous what the fingers of the Hindu are able to accomplish. Dr. Forbes Watson, a few years ago, caused the finest known specimen of Dacca muslin to be examined by the microscope; it was found that the thread which the weaver employed, was only a seven-hundred-and-fiftieth part of an inch in thickness: that is, seven such threads, laid side by side, would be less than a hundredth of an inch in width. Each thread contained about nine of the ultimate cotton filaments.

The flaggee-working and the ivory carving at the Museum, show us that those two arts have arrived in India at a degree of perfection scarcely equalled in any other country. We can understand this better, when we remember how small is the value of time in those parts. Where men can live upon twopence a day, it is not a matter of serious concern that an ornamental piece of work should sometimes take a workman months, or even years, to execute.

Among the thousand and one oddities that meet the view, in this instalment only of the collection possessed by the India Department, are pictures relating to Oriental subjects, prints and drawings of Indian scenery and buildings, models of proas and catamarans and other kinds of boats, stuffed animals and dried fishes, small specimens illustrating the natural history of India, cases of butterflies and beetles, cases of eggs and birds, pipes and hookahs from the very humble to the very gorgeous, models of temples and sacred buildings, idols that are in favour, some among the Brahmins and some among the Buddhists.

But a few words must be spared for the Tiger. Surely the world contains not such another! When Tippoo Sultan was defeated and killed at Seringapatam, in 1799, the English troops found in the palace, a figure of a tiger tearing to pieces a prostrate soldier, intended to represent an Englishman. The tiger was moderately well modelled; the soldier was ludicrously bad: made to be laughed at, it would seem. This tiger was a musical instrument. A handle in the shoulder turned a spindle and crank; and this crank was connected with mechanism which filled nearly the whole of the tiger and the man. One part of the music consisted of the shrieks and groans of the man; another, of two or three roaring sounds, intended to imitate the growl of the tiger; while, to produce certain musical effects,

of which the purpose is not now quite clear, there were eighteen organ pipes, nine studs or keys to play them, two stops to divide them into qualities of sound, and bellows to blow them. Such was Tippoo's tiger, which he used to enjoy as a musical instrument: listening alternately to the shrieks of the biped, and the growls of the quadruped. It has travelled from Seringapatam to Leadenhall-street; thence to Fife House, and now to the new India office. It is certainly none the better for its migrations. The stripes of the tiger are nearly gone, and the paint is chipped off. The pipes, the keys, and the stops are there, it is true; but the bellows have lost their wind, and we suspect there will be no more shrieking or growling. As to the Englishman, he certainly is the very picture of misery, with his stiff legs, black shoes, yellow painted buckles, round black hat, scarlet coat, green breeches, and yellow stockings, all begrimed with seventy years of dust and tarnish.

KING PIPPIN'S PALACE.

I DEEPLY regret that it should be my duty to sound the alarm; but I am constrained to state my fears that there is something the matter with our old, and, generally, esteemed friend the Dwarf. I don't meet him in society, that is to say, at the fairs as I was wont to do; and although I do not overlook the fact that I have ceased to attend fairs, and that, indeed, there are very few fairs of the old kind left to frequent, it is difficult to avoid the unpleasant conviction that dwarfs, as a race, are dying out. Very recently, in his strange, eloquent romance, *L'homme qui rit*, M. Victor Hugo has told us that the pigmy, preferably monstrous and deformed, whose pictured semblance is to be found in so many works of the old Italian and German masters, was, to most intents and purposes, a manufactured article. That mysterious association of the "Comprachicos," of whom M. Hugo has told us so many strange things, pursued, among their varied branches of industry, the art of fabricating hunchbacked, abdominous, hydrocephalous, and spindle-shanked dwarfs for the European market: the purchasers being the princes, potentates, and wealthy nobles of the continent. The Comprachicos would seem to have borrowed the mystery of dwarf-making from the Chinese, who had an agreeable way of putting a young child into a pot of arbitrary form, from which the top and bottom had been knocked out, and in the sides of which were two holes, through which the juvenile patient's arms protruded. The merry consequence was that young master's

body, if he did not die during the process, grew to be of the shape of the pot, and, so far as the torso went, the order of amateurs for a spherical dwarf, or an oval dwarf, or an hexagonal dwarf, or a dwarf with knobs on his chest, or an "egg-and-tongue" pattern on his shoulders, could be executed with promptitude and despatch.*

But we have another informant, of perhaps greater weight and authority, who has told us in what manner dwarfs, and bandy, and rickety, and crooked-spined children can be manufactured without the aid either of the Comprachicos or of the Chinese potters. The learned and amiable Cheselden has dwelt minutely in his *Anatomy* on the wickedly cruel and barbarous folly which marked the system of nursing babies in his time, and has shown how the practice of tightly swaddling and unskilfully carrying infants was calculated to cripple and deform their limbs, and to stunt their growth. We have grown wonderfully wiser since Cheselden's time, although I have heard some cynics mutter that the custom of growing children in pipkins could not have been more detrimental to health or to the symmetry of the human form than is the modern fashion of tight lacing.

Be all this as it may, I still hold that the dwarf—well, the kind of dwarf who can be seen for a penny at a fair—continues, as the French say, "to make himself desired." Surely his falling off must be due to the surcease of the manufacture. Old manufactured dwarfs are as difficult to light upon as Mortlake tapestry or Chelsea china, simply, I suppose, because tapestry is no longer woven at Mortlake, and Chelsea produces no more

porcelain ware. To an amateur of dwarfs it is positively distressing to read the numerous detailed accounts which the historians have left us of bygone troglodytes. Passing by such world-famous manikins as Sir Jeffery Hudson and Count Borulawski, where can one hope, in this degenerate age, to light on a Madame Teresa, better known by the designation of the Corsican Fairy, who came to London in 1773, being then thirty years of age, thirty-four-inches high, and weighing twenty-six pounds? "She possessed much vivacity and spirit, could speak Italian and French with fluency, and gave the most inquisitive mind an agreeable entertainment." England has produced a rival to Madame Teresa in Miss Anne Shepherd, who was three feet ten inches in height, and was married, in Charles the First's time, to Richard Gibson, Esq., page of the backstairs to his majesty, and a distinguished miniature painter. Mr. Gibson was just forty-six inches high, and he and his bride were painted "in whole length" by Sir Peter Lely. The little couple are said to have had nine children, who all attained the usual standard of mankind; and three of the boys, according to the chronicles of the backstairs, enlisted in the Life Guards.

But what are even your Hudsons and your Gibsons, your Corsican Fairies, and your Anne Shepherds to the dwarfs of antiquity? Where am I to look for a parallel to the homunculus who flourished in Egypt in the time of the Emperor Theodosius, and who was so small of body that he resembled a partridge, yet had all the functions of a man, and would sing tuneably? Mark Antony is said to have owned a dwarf called Sisyphus, who was not of the full height of two feet, and was yet of a lively wit. Had this Sisyphus been doomed to roll a stone it must surely have been no bigger than a schoolboy's marble. Ravisius—who was Ravisius?—narrates that Augustus Cæsar exhibited in his plays one Lucius, a young man born of honest parents, who was twenty-three inches high, and weighed seventeen pounds; yet had he a strong voice. In the time of Jamblichus, also, lived Alypius of Alexandria, a most excellent logician, and a famous philosopher, but so small in body that he hardly exceeded a cubit, or one foot five inches and a half in height. And, finally, Carden tells us—but who believes Carden?—that he saw a man of full age in Italy, not above a cubit high, and who was

* Setting M. Hugo's wild myth of the Comprachicos entirely on one side, most students of the social history of England are aware that the custom of kidnapping children (generally to be sold as slaves in the West Indies or the American plantations) was frightfully prevalent in this country in the seventeenth, and during the early part of the eighteenth century, and that Bristol was dishonourably distinguished as the port whence the greater number of the hapless victims were despatched beyond sea. And it is a very curious circumstance, which appears to have been overlooked by Lord Macaulay in his notice of Jeffries, that the infamous judge, shortly before the Bloody Assize, went down to Bristol, and delivered to the grand jury at the assizes a most eloquent and indignant charge, overflowing with sentiments of humanity, bearing on the practice of kidnapping children for the plantations—a practice which his lordship roundly accused the corporation of Bristol of actively aiding and abetting for their own advantage and gain. Jeffries' charge is preserved in the library of the British Museum, and is as edifying to read as the sentimental ballad *What is Love?* by Mr. Thomas Paine, or as would be an Essay upon *Cruelty to Animals*, with proposals for the suppression thereof, by the late Emperor Nero.

carried about in a parrot's cage. "This," remarks Wanley, in his *Wonders of the Little World*, "would have passed my belief had I not been told by a gentleman of a clear reputation, that he saw a man at Sienna, about two years since, not exceeding the same stature. A Frenchman he was, of the county of Limosin, with a formal beard, who was likewise shown in a cage for money, at the end whereof was a little hatch into which he retired, and when the assembly was full came forth and played on an instrument." The very thing we have all seen at the fairs, substituting the simulacrum of a three-storied house for a cage, and not forgetting the modern improvements of the diminutive inmate ringing a bell, and firing a pistol out of the first-floor window!

And after banquetting on these bygone dwarfs, who were scholars and gentlemen, as well as monstrosities, for was not Alypius, cited above, a famous logician and philosopher? and did not Richard Gibson, Esq., teach Queen Anne the art of drawing, and proceed on a special mission to Holland to impart artistic instruction to the Princess of Orange? after dwelling on the dwarfs who formed part of the retinue of William of Normandy when he invaded England, and who held the bridle of the Emperor Otho's horse; after remembering the dwarfs whom Dominichino and Raffaele, Velasquez and Paul Veronese have introduced in their pictures; after this rich enjoyment of dwarfish record I am thrown back on General Tom Thumb. I grant the General, and the Commodore, and their ladykind a decent meed of acknowledgment. I confess them calm, self-possessed, well bred, and innocuous; but I have no heart to attend their "levées." Nutt, in the caricature of a naval uniform, does not speak to my heart; I have no ambition to see Thumb travestied as the late Emperor Napoleon—that conqueror could, upon occasion, cause himself to appear even smaller than Thumb—nor am I desirous of purchasing photographic cartes de visite of Minnie Warren. My dwarf is the gorgeously attired little pagod of the middle ages; the dwarf who pops out of a pie at a court banquet; the dwarf who runs between the court jester's legs and trips him up; the dwarf of the king of Brobdingnag, who is jealous of Gulliver, and souses his rival in a bowl of cream, and gets soundly whipped for his pains. Or, in default of this pigmy, give me back the dwarf of my youth in his sham three-storied house, with his tinkling bell and sounding pistol.

It is not to be, I presume. These many years past I have moodily disbursed in divers parts of the world sundry francs, lire, guilders, florins, thalers, reals, dollars, piastres, and mark-banco for the sight of dwarfs; but they (Thumb and his company included) have failed to come up to my standard of dwarfish excellence. Did you ever meet with anything or anybody that could come up to that same standard? Man never is, but always to be blest; still, although my dreams of dwarfs have not as yet been fully realised, I have been able to enjoy the next best thing to fulfilment. I call to mind perhaps the wonderfullest dwarfs' house existing on the surface of this crazy globe. It is a house in the construction and the furniture of which many thousands of pounds were expended; and it was built by a king for his son. It is for this reason that I have called the diminutive mansion "The Palace of King Pippin."

King Pippin's Palace is in Spain, and has been shamefully neglected by English tourists in that interesting country. For my part I think that it would be a great advantage to picturesque literature if the Alhambra and the Alcazar, the Bay of Cadiz, and the Rock of Gibraltar, the Sierra Morena and the Mezquita of Cordova, the Cathedral of Burgos, and the Bridge of Toledo, could be eliminated altogether from Spanish topography. By those means travellers in Spain would have a little more leisure to attend to a number of "cosas de España" which are at present passed by almost without notice. Among them is this incomparable dwarf house of mine. You will observe that I have excluded the Escorial from the catalogue of places which English sight-seers in the Peninsula might do well, for a time, to forget. The Real Monasterio de San Lorenzo must needs be visited, for King Pippin's Palace is a dependency of that extraordinary pile. Few tourists have the courage to admit, in print at least, that this palace-monastery, or monastery-palace of the Escorial is a gigantic bore. When it was my lot to visit it, my weariness began even before I had entered its halls; for in the railway carriage which conveyed our party from Madrid to the "Gridiron station" there was a fidgetty little Andalusian, a maker of guitar strings, I think he was, at Utrera, who was continually rebounding on the cushions like a parched pea in a fire-shovel, and crying out to us, "El edificio, caballeros, donde está el edi-

ficio?" It was his first visit to the Northern provinces of his native country, and he was burning to see the "edificio." To him, evidently, there was but one edifice in the world, and that was the Escorial. When at last he caught sight of its sullen façades, its stunted dome and blue slate roofs, the little Andalusian fell into a kind of ecstasy, and protruded so much of his body out of the carriage window, that I expected him every moment to disappear altogether. To my surprise, however, when the train drew up at the station he did not alight, but murmuring the conventional "Pues, Señores, echemos un cigarito," "Well, gentlemen, let us make a little cigar," calmly rolled up a tube of paper with tobacco, lit it, and adding, "Vamos al Norte," subsided into sleep, and, the train aiding, pursued his journey to the Pyrenees, or Paris, or the North Pole, or wheresoever else he was bound. He was clearly a philosopher. He had seen "El edificio" from afar off. Was not that enough? I dare say when he went back to Utrera he talked guide-book by the page to his friends, and minutely described all the marvels of the interior of the palace. I rarely think of the little Andalusian without recalling Sheridan's remark to his son Tom, about the coal pits: "Can't you *say* you've been down?"

The "Edifice" itself is really and without exaggeration a bore. The good pictures have all been taken away to swell the attractions of the Real Museo at Madrid; the jolly monks have been driven out and replaced by a few meagre, atrabilious-looking, shovel-hatted seminarists (even these, since the last political earthquake in Spain, may have disappeared) and it is with extreme difficulty that you can persuade the custodes to show you the embroidered vestments in the sacristy, or the illuminated manuscripts in the library. The guardians of every public building in Spain have a settled conviction that all foreign travellers are Frenchmen, who, following the notable example of Marshals Soult and Victor in the Peninsular War, are bent on stealing something. Moreover, the inspection of embroidered copes, dalmatics, and chasubles soon palls on sight-seers who are not crazy upon the subject of Ritualism; and as for being trotted through a vast library when you have no time to read the books, all I can say is, that in this respect I prefer a bookstall in Gray's-inn-lane, with free access to the "twopenny box," to the library of the Escorial, to the Bibliothèque Impériale, the Bodleian, Sion College, and

the library of St. Mark to boot. The exterior of the Escorial, again, is absolutely hideous; its grim granite walls, pierced with innumerable eyelet-holes, with green shutters, remind the spectator equally of the Wellington Barracks, Colney Hatch Lunatic Asylum, and the Great Northern Hotel at King's-cross. The internal decorations principally consist of huge, sprawling, wall-and-ceiling frescoes by Luca Giordano, surnamed "Luca fa Presto," or Luke in a hurry. This Luke the Labourer has stuck innumerable saints, seraphs, and other celestial personages upon the plaster. He executed his apotheoses by the yard, for which he was paid according to a fixed tariff, a reduction, I suppose, being made for clouds; and the result of his work is about as interesting as that of Sir James Thornhill in the Painted Hall of Greenwich Hospital. Almost an entire day must be spent if you wish to see the Escorial thoroughly, and you grow, at last, fretful and peevish well-nigh to distraction at the jargon of the guides, with their monotonous statistics of the eleven thousand windows of the place, the two thousand and two feet of its area, the sixty-three fountains, the twelve cloisters, the sixteen "patios" or courtyards, the eighty staircases, and so forth. As for the relics preserved of that nasty old man Philip the Second, his greasy hat, his walking-stick, his shabby elbow-chair, the board he used to rest his gouty leg upon, they never moved me. There is something beautifully and pathetically interesting in the minutest trifle which remains to remind us of Mary Queen of Scots. Did you ever see her watch, in the shape of a death's head, the works in the brain-pan, and the dial enamelled on the base of the jaw? But who would care about a personal memento of Bloody Queen Mary? She was our countrywoman, but most of us wish to forget her bad individuality, utterly. Should we care anything more about her Spanish husband?

To complete the lugubrious impressions which gather round you in this museum of cruelty, superstition, and madness, you are taken to an appalling sepulchre underground: a circular vault, called, absurdly enough, the "Pantheon," where, on ranges of marble shelves, are sarcophagi containing the ashes of all the kings and queens who have afflicted Spain since the time of Charles the Fifth. This bonehouse is rendered all the more hideous by the fact of its being ornamented in the most garishly theatrical manner with porphyry and verde.

antique, with green and yellow Jasper, with bronze gilt bas-reliefs, and carvings in variegated marble, and other gimeracks. There is an old English loution which laughs at the man who would put a brass knocker on a pigsty-door. Is such an architect worthier of ridicule than he who paints and gilds and tricks up a charnel-house to the similitude of a playhouse? As, with a guttering wax-taper in your hand, you ascend the staircase leading from this Pantheon into daylight and the world again, your guide whispers to you that to the right is another and ghastlier Golgotha, where the junior scions of Spanish royalty are buried, or rather where their coffins lie huddled together, pell-mell. The polite name for this place, which might excite the indignation of "graveyard" Walker (he put a stop to intramural interments in England, and got no thanks for his pains) is the "Pantheon of the Infantes." The common people call it, with much more brevity and infinitely more eloquence, "El Pútridero," the "rotting place." The best guide-book you can take with you to this portion of the Escorial is Jeremy Taylor's sermon on Death.

Once out of the Escorial, "Luke's iron crown"—I mean the crown of Luca fa Presto's ponderous heroes—is at once removed from your brow, on which it has been pressing with the deadeat of weights. Once rid of the Pantheon, and the stone staircases, and the slimy cloisters, and you feel inclined to chirrup, almost. The gardens are handsome, although shockingly out of repair; but bleak as is the site, swept by the almost ceaseless mountain blasts of the Guadarrama range, it is something to be rid of Luca fa Presto, and Philip the Second, and St. Lawrence and his gridiron, and all their gloomy company. You breathe again; and down in the village yonder there is a not bad inn called the Biscaina, where they cook very decent omelettes, and where the wine is drinkable. But before you think of dining you must see King Pippin's Palace.

This is the "Casita del Principe de abajo," the "little house of the prince on the heights," and was built by Juan de Villanueva, for Charles the Fourth, when heir-apparent. The only circumstances, perhaps, under which a king of Spain can be contemplated with complacency are those of childhood. In Madrid, I used always to have a sneaking kindness for the infantes and infantas—"los niños de España"—who, with their nurses and go-

vernesses, and their escort of dragoons and lancers, used to be driven every afternoon in their gilt coaches drawn by fat mules, through the Puerta del Sol to the Retiro. The guard at the Palace of the Gobernacion used to turn out, the trumpets would be flourished bravely as "los niños" went by. Poor little urchins! In the pictures of Don Diego Velasquez, the niños, in their little ruffs, and kirtles, and farthingales, or their little starched doublets and trunk hose, with their chubby peachy cheeks, their ruddy lips, and great melting black eyes look irresistibly fascinating. Ah! my infantes and infantas of Don Diego, why did you not remain for aye at the Toddler's stage? why did you grow up to be tyrants, and madmen, and bigots, and imbeciles, and no better than you should have been? This Carlos the Fourth, for instance, for whom King Pippin's Palace was built, made an exceedingly bad end of it. He was the king who was led by the nose by a worthless wife, and a more worthless favourite, Godoy, who was called "Prince of the Peace," and who lived to be quite forgotten, and to die in a garret in Paris. Carlos the Fourth was the idiot who allowed Napoleon to kidnap him. He was the father of the execrable Ferdinand the Seventh, the betrayer of his country, the restorer of the Inquisition, and the embroiderer of petticoats for the Virgin.

King, or rather Prince Pippin, Charles the Third's son, is represented in a very curious style of portraiture, in one of the apartments of the Escorial itself, a suite fitted up by his father in anti-monastic style, that is to say, in the worst kind of Louis Quinze rococo. The king employed the famous Goya to make a series of designs to be afterwards woven on a large scale in tapestry, and Goya consequently produced some cartoons which, with their reproductions in loom-work, may be regarded as the burlesque antipodes to the immortal patterns which Raffaele set the weavers of Arras. In one of the Goya hangings you see the juvenile members of the royal family at their sports, attended by a select number of young scions of the sangre azul. At what do you think they are playing? at *bull fighting*: a game very popular among the blackguard little street boys of Madrid to this day. One boy plays the bull. He has merely to pop a cloth over his head, holding two sticks passing through holes in the cloth at obtuse angles to his head, to represent the horns of the animal. The "picadores" are children pickaback, who,

with canes for lances, tilt at bull. The "chulos" train their jackets, the "bandarilleros" fling wreathed hoopsticks for darts, in admirable caricature of the real blood-thirsty game you see in the bull-ring. Prince Pippin of course is the "matador," the slayer. He stands alone, superb and magnanimous, intrepidity in his mien, fire in his eye, and a real little Toledo rapier in his hand. Will the bull dare to run at the heir-apparent of the throne of Spain and the Indies? Quien sabe! Train up a child in the way he should go; and a youth of bull-fighting is a fit preparative for a manhood of cruelty and an old age of bigoted superstition.

It is somewhat difficult to give an idea of the precise size of Pippin's Palace. Mr. Ford, who speaks of the entire structure with ineffable contempt, says that it is "just too small to live in, and too large to wear on a watch chain;" but I maintain that the Casita del Principe is quite big enough to be the country residence of Thumb, or Nutt, or Miss Warren, or Gibson, or Hudson, or Ann Shepherd, or Madame Teresa, or Wybrand Lolkes, the Dutch dwarf; a wonderful little fellow with a head like a dolphin's, no perceptible trunk, and two little spindle-shanks like the legs of a skeleton clock. There should properly be a statue cast from the Manikin at Brussels in the vestibule of the Casita; but, if I recollect aright, the only object of sculpture in the hall is a life-size cast of the Apollo Belvedere, whose head of course touches the palatial ceiling. Could that inanimate effigy stand on tiptoe he would assuredly send the first floor flying, and could he perform but one vertical leap, he would have the roof off the palace in the twinkling of a bed-post. There is a tiny grand staircase which (from dolorous experience) I know to be somewhat of a tight fit for a stout tourist; and to increase the exquisite grotesqueness of the whole affair, the walls are panelled in green and yellow jasper and porphyry, and there are verde antique columns and scagliola pilasters, and bas-reliefs in gilt bronze on every side, just as there are in the horrible tomb-house hard by. There are dozens of rooms in King Pippin's Palace: dining-rooms, audience chambers, council chambers, bed-rooms, libraries, ante-chambers, boudoirs, guard-rooms, and ball rooms, the dimen-

sions of which vary between those of so many store-cupboards, and so many midshipmen's sea-chests. But the pearl, the cream, the consummation of the crack-brained joke is that the furniture does not in any way harmonise with the proportions of the building. The house is a baby one, but the furniture is grown up. The chairs and tables are suited for the accommodation of adults of full growth. The walls are hung with life-size portraits of the Spanish Bourbons. The busts, statuettes, French clocks, chandeliers, China gimcracks, and ivory baubles are precisely such as you might see in a palace inhabited by grown-up kings and princes. The whole place is a pippin into which a crazy king has endeavoured to cram the contents of a pumpkin; and, but for the high sense I entertain of the obligations of decorum, and the indelicacy of wounding the susceptibilities of foreigners, I might, had the proper appliances been at hand, have wound up my inspection of the Palace of King Pippin, by ringing a shrill peal on a hand-bell, or firing a pistol out of the first-floor window.

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A Weekly Journal

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WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED

"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

VERONICA.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE."
IN FIVE BOOKS.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER I. A NEW VICAR FOR SHIPLEY.

THE Church Intelligence announced one day, much to the fluttering of the village of Shipley, and also to the fluttering of some disappointed hearts in clerical breasts, that the Reverend Charles Levincourt was presented to the vacant living of Shipley-in-the-Wold.

The Reverend Charles Levincourt was presented to the living of Shipley-in-the-Wold by Sir William Delaney, to whose only son he had been tutor.

Sir William had always expressed his sense of obligation to Mr. Levincourt for the unremitting and judicious care he had bestowed on his son James's education. The young man was sickly in body and inert in mind; nevertheless he had passed through his university career in a fairly creditable manner. This was mainly owing, as every one admitted, to his tutor's talents and zeal. Therefore when the not very lucrative living of Shipley fell vacant, it was the most natural thing in the world that Sir William should bestow it on a gentleman for whose services he professed himself sincerely grateful. But neither Shipley-in-the-Wold nor the world out of the Wold by any means understood the mainspring of this sincere gratitude.

James was the baronet's only son, but Sir William was also the father of two daughters. While the elder of these young ladies—Hilda—was going through the gaieties of a London season (at the end of which she became Lady Tallis), Clara—a girl of seventeen—was quietly falling

in love with her brother's tutor in the country.

The Delaneys were Irish people. They lived chiefly at the place which bore their family name: an estate called Delaney Park in the South of Ireland. James passed the long vacation at home, and Mr. Levincourt came with him. Clara was a delicate, shy, sweet-natured creature; motherless, and more innocent of worldliness in her eighteenth year, than many a precocious inmate of a Belgravian nursery.

Charles Levincourt loved her, better than he was destined ever to love another human being. But he "behaved admirably," Sir William always declared.

How? Well, in a word, he went abroad with a rich minor to whose guardians Sir William Delaney warmly recommended his son's tutor.

Before two years were over, the family at Delaney Park learned that Mr. Levincourt was married in Italy, to a foreign lady of great beauty, but no fortune.

Soon afterwards Clara yielded to her father's solicitations and accepted the hand of Sidney Power Desmond, Esquire, of Desmond Court, county Cork: a gentleman of good family, whose estate adjoined her father's. On his second daughter's wedding morning, Sir William wrote to Charles Levincourt, promising him the next presentation, then likely to fall in very shortly, to the English living of Shipley-in-the-Wold. No one save her father knew that it was Clara who had asked and obtained this boon.

But she had said to Sir William in her quiet sweet voice, "Papa, James had a letter the other day from Mr. Levincourt. He has not succeeded in getting appointed to the foreign chaplaincy he was trying for. His wife has just had a little girl. I am afraid

they are very poor. I wish you would promise him the next presentation to Shipley. You could not do better. He is so clever and so learned, and—and he was very good to James, papa dear."

In this way, the Reverend Charles Levin-court became vicar of Shipley-in-the-Wold.

CHAPTER II. SHIPLEY VICARAGE.

THE small and obscure village of Shipley-in-the-Wold, stands in one of the western-most of the midland counties.

Its name was given in days before the whole of that part of England had been marked by the plough and spade, like a page by the tracings of a pen. Generation after generation has left its sign-manual on the face of the land: each writing the record of its labours in straight furrows on many a fertile field: furrows effaced and changed and renewed, from season to season, and from age to age, as are the waving ripples on a seaside sand, washed by the eternal tides.

A stretch of furze-grown common is, perhaps, the only remnant of that characteristic aspect of the country which gave Shipley its distinctive appellation.

There are wide, flat meadows all round about it, where herds of cattle graze on the dew-fed grass. The principal farms in the immediate neighbourhood of Shipley-in-the-Wold, are grazing farms. All the land is flat and monotonous as far as the eye can see; save to the westward, where the horizon line is broken by a range of low turf-covered hills, called by the inhabitants of those parts, emphatically "*the Hills*." Behind "*the Hills*" lies another Shipley; Shipley Magna, a tiny market town.

If it could be reached by a direct line cut through one swelling green mound, Shipley Magna would not be more than two or three miles distant from Shipley-in-the-Wold. But the road winds about and over the hills; and it is six miles from the village to the town. Southward the landscape grows prettier and more smiling. There are trees, and there is arable land where, in summer, wide fields of sunburnt grain wave, and rock, and change colour in the breeze, as a face pales or flushes at a sudden whisper.

But Shipley-in-the-Wold only beholds these things from afar. The stretch of furze-grown common already mentioned, and beyond that, a considerable extent of oozy marshland, separate it from the smiling southern country.

In the winter season, bleak winds sweep

scythe-winged over Shipley; the snow lies deep about it; and often a single track of hoofs, and wheels, and feet may be traced in long black lines and uncouth dots, for miles across the otherwise unbroken whiteness of the level.

The village straggles over a considerable extent of ground, but its houses are few and its population is scanty. There is nothing which can be called a main street belonging to it.

The dwellings stand scattered irregularly; here a cottage, and there a cottage, and each one is set within its own little patch of kitchen-garden.

The place is remote from any great centre of commerce and activity. No railway passes near it.

Twenty miles to the southward, among the trees and the cornfields, lies the cathedral city of Danecester; with its bishop, and its dean, and its minster, and many other civilising and excellent institutions. But Danecester is, after all, but a silent, sleepy, old-fashioned city; and it wots little, and cares less, about poor little Shipley out on the bleak, wind-swept flats.

There is a very ancient church in Shipley: a low-roofed, stone church with round arches, pillars of disproportionate thickness, and a square, squat tower. It has a deep porch, to enter which you descend two steps from the graveyard. The labouring centuries have piled their dust high around the massive masonry of St. Gildas's church, and the level of the outside earth is considerably above that of the stone pavement within the little temple.

The graveyard is enclosed by a low wall, and its gateway is a relic of antiquity coeval with the church itself. The said gateway is of hewn stone, with a projecting pent-house roof, and beneath it on one side is a large stone slab, cracked, weather-stained, and half sunk into the earth. Here, in the old time, the coffin-bearers were wont to set down their burthen, and a preliminary prayer for the dead was said before entering the churchyard.

There is no beauty in St. Gildas's graveyard. It lies defenceless and exposed to every wild north-easterly gale that sweeps over the flats. Its clustered mounds are turf-grown. Sheep graze there sometimes in summer. The few grave-stones, as yet undefaced by time and weather, bear humble names of yeomen and peasants, born, living, and dying, at Shipley, generation after generation.

There are some rank flaunting marigolds

growing beside the porch, and a sickly-hued chrysanthemum raises its head to peer over the low rough wall of the graveyard. Other growth, save nettles, dock leaves, and dank, shadow-loving, nameless weeds, there is none.

Hard by the church stands the vicarage house. It is a lonely dwelling. There is no habitation of any kind within a mile of it: none above the rank of a peasant's cottage within two miles.

Shipley vicarage is either not old enough or too old, to be picturesque. It was built in the middle of what may be termed, emphatically, the ugly age; the period, namely, during which the four Georges successively occupied the throne of these realms. It is a nearly square house of yellowish-brown brick. Its rooms are oblong and rectangular, its windows mean, its staircases narrow. There is no break or relief in the flat wall-surfaces, nor in the blank desert of the whitewashed ceilings.

Behind the house extends a large garden, the high wall of which skirts a bye-lane branching from the main high-road to Shipley Magna. In front is a lawn, cut in two by a long straight gravel path that leads from an iron wicket in the box hedge, up to the hall door. This lawn is only divided by a paddock from St. Gildas's churchyard.

Two quivering poplars whisper to each other and nod mysteriously from either side of the iron gate: and the windows of the lower rooms in the front of the house, are darkened by clumps of evergreens, among which an old yew-tree rises gloomily conspicuous.

The vicarage faces due south, and looks across the common and the marsh, to where tufty woodlands break the level, and hide the distant spires of Danecester.

The Reverend Charles Levincourt, vicar of St. Gildas, arrived to take possession of his new home on a dreary day in the latter autumn; when the rain dripped sadly from the sombre evergreens, and low, lead-coloured clouds were melting into slant showers over the common.

"It is not a hopeful scene," said he, as he looked about him, and shivered.

He afterwards saw the scene under a countless variety of aspects; but that first dispiriting impression of Shipley struck the key-note of the place, and became an abiding under-tone, sounding through all subsequent changes.

CHAPTER III. A WARD.

MR. LEVINCOURT had been established some years at Shipley, when one day he

received a letter from the junior partner in a London firm of solicitors, Frost and Lovegrove, informing him that he (the Reverend Charles Levincourt, vicar of Shipley-in-the-Wold), had been appointed co-executor with the writer (Augustus Lovegrove) of the will of the late Mrs. Desmond, relict of Sidney Power Desmond, Esquire, formerly of Desmond Court, county Cork; and further requesting the vicar's presence in town as soon as might be.

Communication between the country clergyman and the family of his old pupil had long since worn away and died out. The old pupil himself had died, at five-and-twenty; his sorrowing father had not long survived him; and this was the first intimation Charles Levincourt received of the widowhood and death of his old love.

He journeyed without delay to London, and saw Mr. Lovegrove. The latter informed him that their joint responsibility, as regarded the administration of Mrs. Desmond's will, would not be an onerous one: the property she had had to leave being very small.

"But," added the solicitor, "your share of the business will be more troublesome. Here is a letter which I solemnly promised our poor friend to deliver into your own hand. She informed me of its main object. It is to request you to undertake the guardianship of her daughter."

"Her daughter?"

"Yes; a nice little girl about nine years old. The only surviving child of a large family. But I thought you knew all the circumstances. You were one of Mrs. Desmond's oldest friends, were you not?"

"I—I—yes; I was a friend of Mrs. Desmond's family many years ago. But Time flies away very fast; and many things fly with him. Was not Mr. Desmond wealthy? I had always understood so."

"My dear sir, Sidney Power Desmond ran through a fine fortune, and sent his paternal acres to the hammer. I saw a good deal of him, and of her too, at one time, when I was professionally engaged in 'winding-up his affairs,' as he would persist in calling it. A tangled skein, that refused to be wound, I can tell you. Mrs. Desmond was a sweet woman. She had a bad life of it, I'm afraid. Not that he treated her ill. He was fond of her, in his way. But he shook her children's inheritance away out of the dice-box, and then he died, several years later than he

ought to have done for the welfare of his family."

The vicar declined Mr. Lovegrove's proffered hospitality, and went back to his dingy hotel chamber to read Clara's letter in solitude.

The letter was short and simple. It appealed to him, on the ground of old friendship, not to decline the trust imposed on him.

"My husband's relatives," thus it ran, "have long been estranged from us. Papa and poor James are dead, and distant cousins who know little and care less about me or mine, possess my old home. My sister, Lady Tallis, is childless, and she would gladly adopt my little one, and would, I well know, be tender and kind to the orphan. But her unhappy domestic circumstances render this impossible. Neither, to say truth, is Hilda's husband a man beneath whose roof I should like my daughter to be brought up, even were he willing to permit it. Hilda has her own troubles. I mention these things, not in any spirit of bitterness, but simply that you may understand how utterly friendless my Maud will be when I am gone: for I know her helplessness will appeal strongly to your kind heart."

The letter was common-place and prosaic enough in form and expression: but to Charles Levincourt, sitting there with the sheet of folded paper in his hand, and thinking of the dead woman whom he once loved so well, there was both pathos and eloquence in the sharply written characters. He mused long and sadly on the events of the past years that had so strangely resulted in giving Clara's only surviving child to his care. But whatsoever reflections or regrets these musings awakened in his mind he imparted to no one.

The next day the vicar returned to Shipley, bringing with him a new inmate to the vicarage house. The little orphan was kindly received by the mistress of her new home. Mrs. Levincourt was an Italian by birth. Her mother had been an Englishwoman, her father a Neapolitan. She had lived abroad all her life until her marriage; was very uneducated, very frivolous, and very beautiful. She had perhaps as small a share of imagination as ever fell to the lot of a human being. The self-confidence arising from this total inability to conceive another person's point of view, to *imagine*, in short, how others might feel or think, was a power which carried her triumphantly over many diffi-

culties. She would reply to an argument or a remonstrance, by some irrelevant platitude which made her husband tingle with shame, but which, to her apprehension, was entirely convincing. On the whole, however, she did her duty well (as far as she understood it) by the little stray lamb brought into her fold. Gentle, it was not in Stella Levincourt's nature to be, but she was kind and attentive to the child's bodily requirements. Mrs. Levincourt's first impression of the little girl, she confided to her husband on the night of his return from London.

"I have put her to bed in a crib in Veronica's room, Charles. She is a quiet docile child, enough. But, oh, caro mio, what a stolid little thing! Just lost her mother, and as cool and as calm as possible!"

The vicar remembered the child's quivering lip, pale cheek, and anxious yearning look into the strange faces that had surrounded her; and he made answer, "Maud is quiet, but I think not stolid, my dear."

"She is English, English, English to the bone!" retorted Mrs. Levincourt, shrugging her graceful shoulders. "Only figure to yourself if I were to die! Veronica—; but then our darling is so sensitive!"

In Charles Levincourt's mind there arose a vision of a sweet, pale, girlish face, which he had last seen gazing after the coach that carried him away from Delaney Park for ever. And the vision, from some unexplained cause, stung him into the utterance of a sarcastic speech. He had long ago ceased to use sarcasm or irony habitually, in talking with his wife.

"I have no doubt, my dear," said he, "that if Veronica were suffering in mind or body she would take care that every one around her should suffer too."

"That she would, poverina!" exclaimed Stella, energetically.

When little Maud Desmond came to live at the vicarage she was nine years old, and Veronica, the vicar's only child, was eleven. After a short time the two little girls were sent to school at Danecester. Veronica had hitherto refused to go from home, and her refusal had sufficed to prevent her going. Her mother indulged her and worshipped her with a blind devotion, which was repaid (as such devotion often is) by a mingling of fondness, disdain, and tyranny.

But now that Maud was to go to school, Veronica declared that she would accompany her; and she did so. And between their home and the quiet Danecester school

the two girls passed several years of their lives.

During the long Midsummer holidays they rambled over the common at Shipley-in-the-Wold, or rode about the country lanes on a rough pony provided for their joint use. In the winter time they would steal into the kitchen of an evening, and coax old Joanna, the cook, to tell them some of her quaint country legends, or stories of ghosts and runaway marriages, and mysterious warnings, which were supposed to be the exclusive (and one would think unenviable) privileges of sundry ancient county families in whose service Joanna had lived.

Or else they would sit in the gloaming at Mrs. Levincourt's knee and listen to her tales of the brilliant life she had led in Florence, the gaiety, the brightness, the company! The balls at the Pitti and at the noble mansions of the Principessa della Scatola da Salsa and the dowager Countess Civetta, and the Russian lady, whose exact rank was not known, but who was supposed to be the wife of a hospodar. Only she and the hospodar did not agree, and so they lived apart; and they met once a year in Paris, and were admirably polite to each other; and the hospodaress allowed the hospodar several millions of roubles per annum to stay away from her; and she had a necklace of emeralds as big, very nearly, as pigeons' eggs; and she smoked the very finest tobacco extant, and she was altogether a most charming person.

These narratives, and many more, did Maud and Veronica greedily devour. Maud believed them with the same sort of good faith with which she threw herself into Aladdin, or the exquisite fancies of Undine. She was willing to accept the Russian lady, pigeons'-egg emeralds and all.

Such people might exist, did, no doubt, but in a far-off way, altogether out of her sphere. She no more expected to meet such an individual hung with chains of barbaric splendour, and puffing forth clouds of incense from an amber pipe, than she anticipated the appearance of a geni twenty feet high, when she rubbed her little turquoise ring to keep it bright.

Veronica, however, being two years older, and owning a different turn of mind, looked at matters in a much more practical light.

"And did you go to balls nearly every night, mamma? And did you wear white dresses with short sleeves, and have flowers in your hair? Oh, how beautiful you must have looked!"

"I was never half so handsome as thou, tesoro mio," the fond mother would reply.

"When I am grown up, I won't stay at Shipley."

That was the burthen of the song, the moral of the story, the issue of it all, for Veronica.

On the whole the family at the vicarage led an isolated life, and the tone of thought and feeling that pervaded their home was very singularly at odds with the general notion of their neighbours as to what was becoming in the household of a clergyman.

In the first place, Mr. Levincourt was entirely devoid of the least tincture of what may, without offence, be called professional parsonism. It is by no means asserted that he was altogether the better for having no such tincture. Men are naturally and legitimately influenced in their outward bearing by the nature of their calling in life. The work which a man does heartily, earnestly, and constantly, will most assuredly communicate a certain bent to his mind, and even a certain aspect to his body. But the work which a man does grudgingly, without thoroughness and faith, will be to him as irksome as an ill-fitting garment, and will, like such a garment, be laid aside and put out of sight altogether whensoever its wearer can get rid of it.

People did not get intimate at the vicarage. The neighbourhood was but sparsely peopled with families of the rank of gentlefolks. Without the command of some vehicle, visiting was out of the question.

At first Mrs. Levincourt had gone out rather frequently to formal dinner-parties at great dull country houses, and also to some country houses that were not dull. The hosts sent their carriages for the vicar and his wife, if they lived at a great distance from Shipley. Or a lumbering old chaise was hired from the Crown at Shipley Magna.

But gradually such intercourse dropped. Mrs. Levincourt was not strong. Mrs. Levincourt did not care for dinner-parties. Mrs. Levincourt had her little girl to attend to. The fact was, that Stella liked society, and she was by no means conscious of the surprise which her sayings and doings were apt to excite among the Daneshire magnates. But her husband was very thoroughly conscious of it. And, as the only kind of visiting they could have, afforded *him* no amusement, their life became more and more secluded.

When the two girls were aged respectively seventeen and fifteen, Mrs. Levincourt died, and then Veronica returned

home to "take charge," as they said, of her father's house.

Maud also came back to Shipley vicarage, having "completed her education"; in other words, having learned all that they could teach her at the Dancester school.

For two years, Veronica reigned mistress of her father's household. Perhaps the burthen of the song, Veronica being nineteen, had only so far changed as to run thus: "Now that I *am* grown up, I won't stay at Shipley"?

We shall see.

CHAPTER IV. AN ACCIDENT.

SOME subtle influence—a sight, or sound, or smell—touched the long-drawn links of association in the vicar's mind as he stood at his own door one February afternoon, and made him remember that dreary autumn day on which he had first seen Shipley.

His thought flashed back along the past years, as the electric spark thrills through a long chain of clasping hands.

"Poor Stella!" he said, half aloud.

Mr. Levincourt was apt to spend a good deal of his available store of compassion on himself. But there is no more effectual check to the indulgence of our own failings and weaknesses, than the exaggerated manifestation of the same defect in another. That which in us is only a reasonable and well-grounded dissatisfaction, becomes mere selfish unjustifiable repining in our neighbours.

So long as his wife lived, therefore, Mr. Levincourt was shamed by her loud and frivolous complainings from expressing one-half the distaste he really felt for his life at Shipley-in-the-Wold, although he had secretly deemed his wife far less entitled to pity than he was, whose qualities of mind and refinement of education enabled him to understand much better what he had lost in being thus buried alive at Shipley.

But Stella Levincourt, born Barletti, slept in St. Gildas's graveyard, and a white tablet glimmering out of the gloomiest corner in the dark little church bore an inscription to her memory. And since her death he had occasionally felt much retrospective sympathy with his wife.

"Poor Stella!" he said again; and, shutting the door behind him, he walked down the gravel pathway, passed through the iron wicket, crossed the paddock, and proceeded thus through St. Gildas's churchyard towards the village.

It was not a day to loiter in. It had

snowed a good deal the previous night, but since ten o'clock that morning, a steady thaw had set in. The roads were deep in mud, whose chill penetrated the stoutest shoe-leather. An ice-cold dew seemed to exude from everything one touched, and the sky spread a lead-coloured canopy from horizon to zenith.

Mr. Levincourt made for the school-house. This was a bare lath-and-plaster building, erected at the cost of the late vicar to serve as a Sunday-school. The present incumbent, while adhering to its founder's first intention, had found an additional use for the whitewashed school-room. It served, namely, as a place for the choir of St. Gildas to practise in.

Before Mr. Levincourt's day, the music at divine service in St. Gildas consisted solely of portions of Tate and Brady, bawled, or snuffled out in monotonous dissonance. Mr. Levincourt's refined and critical ear suffered many a shock from his congregation's strenuously uplifted voices. He resolved to amend the singing, and flattered himself that he would find support and encouragement in this undertaking. But folks were as loath to be amended in Shipley, as in most other places: and Mr. Levincourt's first attempts to teach them harmony, resulted in discord dire.

By degrees he lowered his pretensions. He had begun with high-flown ideas of foreign mass-music adapted to English words. Then, some of the simpler compositions of our English cathedral writers were attempted. At length he resolved to be satisfied with Martin Luther's Hymn, and *Adeste Fideles*, sung in parts. Things began to go better. The younger generation, trained to some knowledge of music, became capable of succeeding in such modest attempts as these. Nor was it, indeed, from the younger generation that the great difficulties had arisen.

Farmer Meggitt, and Farmer Sack, and other middle-aged farmers and graziers, could not be got to understand that it behoved them to be passive listeners to the music during service.

"What do ye mean then, by 'Let us sing to the praise——'? Let us," Farmer Meggitt said *oos*, "sing! Not 'let the little lads and wenches in the organ-loft, sing to the praise!' Parson Levincourt's on a wrong tack altogether. And as to his new-fangled tunes—why they're Popish: that's what they are: and I don't care who hears me say so!"

The implied slight to Farmer Meggitt's

vocal abilities made him very Protestant indeed. And the charge of Popery against Mr. Levincourt was supposed to be a very colourable and serious one, seeing that he had a foreign wife.

However, Time went on in his task of turning "new-fangled" things into old-fangled. And the congregation of St. Gildas had long grown very proud of their singing. Miss Desmond had a class of village children to whom she taught some of the mysteries contained in the queer black-headed hieroglyphics on the musical staff; and the choir met to practise every Saturday afternoon. And on this one special Saturday afternoon in February, Mr. Levincourt having floundered through the thick mud of the lane, arrived at the school-house door, turned the handle, and walked in, when the practising was just over.

The children were making ready to troop out. Some of the little boys, uneasy under the stern glance of Mr. Mugworthy, the parish clerk, still sat on the wooden benches, from which their corduroy-clad legs dangled and swung, as unrestingly as the pendulum of the big white-faced clock that ticked away the hours above the door.

At a little deal-cased harmonium sat Herbert Snowe, the son of a rich Danecester banker. This young gentleman had been educated in Germany, where he had caught a taste for music. His dilettanteism was strong enough to induce him to make the journey from Danecester nearly every week, in order to supply, at the Saturday rehearsals, the place of the professional organist, who was only engaged to come to Shipley for the Sunday services.

Not far from him, stood Mr. Plew, the village doctor, talking to the vicar's daughter. Mr. Plew had the meekest and weakest of high tenor voices, and gave the choir the benefit of his assistance whenever his professional avocations would permit him to do so.

Then, there were Kitty and Cissy Meggitt, with their governess, Miss Turtle. Mrs. Meggitt was of an aspiring nature, and had prevailed on her husband to engage a "real lady" to teach her girls manners. Farmer Meggitt paid the "real lady" five-and-twenty pounds per annum, and he thought in his heart that it was an exorbitantly high price for the article.

Then, there were Captain and Mrs. Sheardown, of Lowater House. They did not sing; but they had come to fetch their son, Master Bobby Sheardown, who sat

on a high school-bench among the "trebles."

Lastly, there was Maud Desmond.

"Good evening," said the vicar, walking into the room.

Immediately there was a shuffling and scraping of feet. Every boy slid down from his bench, and drew each one a hob-nailed boot noisily over the bare floor in homage, raising at the same time a bunch of sunburnt knuckles to his forehead. The little girls ducked down convulsively, the smaller ones assisting themselves to rise again with an odd struggling movement of the elbow.

This was the ceremony of salutation to a superior among the rustic youth of Shipley.

"How have you been getting on, Herbert?" said Mr. Levincourt. "How do you do, Mrs. Sheardown? Captain, when I saw that the West Daneshire were to meet at Hammick, I scarcely expected to have the pleasure of seeing you this evening!"

"No; I didn't hunt to-day," answered the captain.

Captain Sheardown was a broad-shouldered man of some five-and-fifty years of age. His bluff face was fringed with white whiskers. His eyes were surrounded by a network of fine lines, that looked as though they had been graven on the firm skin by an etching-needle, and he generally stood with his legs somewhat wide apart, as one who is balancing himself on an unsteady surface.

The gentlemen gathered together into a knot by themselves while they waited for the ladies to put on their warm shawls and cloaks.

"I wonder what sort of a run they had with the West Daneshire?" said Herbert Snowe.

"I heard, sir, as there were a accident on the field," said Mr. Mugworthy, who had edged himself near to the group of gentlemen.

"An accident!" repeated the vicar. "What was it? Nothing serious, I trust?"

"No, sir; from what I can reap out of the rumour of the boy, Sack, it warn't a very serious accident. Jemmy Sack, he seen it, sir. It happened close up by his father's farm."

"Sack's farm, eh?" said Captain Sheardown. "Why that's at Haymoor!"

"Well, sir, it is:" rejoined Mr. Mugworthy, after a moment's pause, as though he had been casting about in his mind for some reasonable means of contradicting

the statement, but finding none, was resolved to be candid, and make a clean breast of it. "It is, sir, at Haymoor, is Sack's farm. I can't say no otherways."

"Whew!" whistled the captain. "Who'd have thought of a fox out of the Hammick cover, making for Haymoor! With the wind as it is, too—and as it has been all day."

"Why shouldn't he?" asked Herbert Snowe, whose foreign education had left him lamentably ignorant on certain matters of which Captain Sheardown conceived that an English gentleman ought to know a good deal.

"Why shouldn't he?" echoed the captain, screwing up his eyes and mouth into an expression of comical vexation, and thereby deepening the finely-graven lines before mentioned. "Why shouldn't he? Bless my soul, Herbert! Because a fox going from Hammick to Haymoor to-day, must have run straight up wind the whole time! That's why. Why shouldn't he? Tshah!"

"A dog-fox, sir," put in Mugworthy, solemnly, "*will* sometimes run up wind at this time of year when he's agoing home, sir."

"Well, well," said the vicar, with the slightest possible air of contempt for the whole subject: "we will suppose that this was a Haymoor fox, who had been visiting his relations at Hammick. But about the accident, Mugworthy?"

"Jemmy Sack, he seen it, sir. Come up here, Jemmy, and tell his reverence about the gentleman as was precipitated off of his horse alongside of the five-acre field."

Jemmy Sack, a lank lad of thirteen, came and stood before the vicar, and with many writhings, and in agonies of bashfulness, delivered himself of his story.

The story simply amounted to his having seen a gentleman flung from his horse with a good deal of violence. The others had ridden on, either not seeing or not heeding. After a while the gentleman's servant had galloped up to his assistance. The gentleman had risen and mounted again: but not the same horse. He took the beast that his servant had been riding, and sent the groom away with the animal that had thrown him. The gentleman had then ridden after the rest of the hunt towards Upper Haymoor.

"Ah! Well, there was not much harm done, I'm happy to find. If the gentleman went on following the hounds, he could not *have been much hurt*," said the vicar.

"You didn't know the gentleman by sight, Jemmy, did you?"

Jemmy did not know the gentleman's name; but he knowed that he was a staying at the Crown Inn, Shipley Magna, and that he had four horses in the stables there, and that the people said as he was a friend of Lord George Segrave's, him as had taken Hammick Lodge for the hunting season. And Jemmy, becoming accustomed to the sound of his own voice addressing gentlefolks, and finding himself listened to, began to grow loquacious, and to volunteer his opinion that the gentleman had a-got a oogly spill, for he turned welly green, and seemed all queer in his head like. But he was a good plucked 'un, for he would go on a-horseback again, and he (Jemmy) had run nigh enough to hear him a-cussin' and a-swearin' at the groom like foon.

In fact so loquacious and graphic in his narrative did Jemmy become, that Mugworthy peremptorily ordered him to hold his tongue, and begone, with the other lads.

The boys shuffled out, glad to be released, and were presently heard whooping down the lane after the manner of their kind.

AS THE CROW FLIES.

DUE EAST. NORWICH TO CROMER.

NORWICH originally rose out of the decay of the adjacent Roman station, and in early ages became a fishing town of such importance, that in Edward the Confessor's time it boasted one thousand three hundred and twenty burgesses, and twenty-five churches. The place was roughly handled by the Conqueror, who hated opposition from Saxon boors who did not know what was good for them. When he levied his contribution, the twenty-five original churches had grown to fifty-four. In 1122, Henry the First kept royal Christmas in the Norfolk capital, and pleased with himself and the world, endowed Norwich with a franchise equal to that of London. About this time Jews began to settle in Norwich; but the wealth and heresy of the bearded men "of the wandering foot and weary eye," alarmed the bigotted monks, and the suspicious citizens, and the populace, roused by the story of a Christian child having been crucified by the Jews, at their Paschal, a horrible massacre ensued. In the same reign a colony of Flemings brought a blessing to the hospitable city that opened its arms to them. They introduced woollen manufactures into the city, and getting their long wool spun at a village called Worsted, about nine miles north of Norwich, drew from the place a name for their goods there prepared. Norwich has ever since remained a great mart for crape, bombazine,

and horse-hair cloth. Blomefield, the Norfolk historian, records that in the reign of Henry the Eighth the yearly sale of Norwich stuffs alone amounted to two hundred thousand pounds, and of stockings to sixty thousand pounds. In 1770, Arthur Young (who by-the-by was here burnt in effigy) represents the analogous amount at one million two hundred thousand pounds.

Many of our kings and queens visited this city, generally when on their way as pilgrims to Walsingham.

There is a Paston letter extant which records some particulars of the visit of Henry the Sixth. William Paston, writing from Sheen, in 1473, writes that the king was just setting out for Norwich. "He will be there," he says, "on Palm Sunday even, and so tarry there all Easter, and then to Walsingham; wherefore ye had need warn William Gognez and his fellows to purvey them of wine enough, for every man beareth me in hand that the town shall be drunk dry as York was when the king was there; and all the best-looking gentlewomen were to be assembled, for my Lord hath made great boast of the fayre and good gentlewomen of the country, and so the king said he would see them sure." An earlier letter of the same collection incidentally mentions that as much victuals could be bought at Norwich for one penny, as at Calais for fifteenpence, and "a pye of Wymondham" to boot.

Mousehold Heath, to the east of Norwich, is a practising ground for riflemen now, as it was for archers when Kett, the tanner, sat in royal state under the Gospel Oak. It was here that Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury, came out to preach to the fierce insurgents who built on the heath rude huts made of boughs and sods of turf. On the same height dwelt Howard, Earl of Surrey, and Queen Elizabeth, when at Norwich, visited his mansion.

In the church of St. Peter, Mancroft, whose lofty tower overhangs the market-place, lies a great Norwich worthy, Sir Thomas Browne, the author of those strange but delightful books, *Religio Medici*, *Urn Burial*, and *The Garden of Cyrus*. His life, written by Dr. Johnson in 1756, first recalled public attention to this learned physician of Charles the Second's time, of whom his editor said: "There is no science in which he does not discover some skill, and scarce any kind of knowledge, profane or sacred, abstruse or elegant, which he does not appear to have cultivated with success."

The crow cannot leave Norwich without remembering that Bishop Corbet lies in the cathedral. "Where be his gibes now?" This jovial, jocular prelate, now so quiet at the upper end of the choir, was chaplain to King James the First, who, in 1627, made him Dean of Christchurch, where he wrote those lines on Great Tom, which end with

And though we are grieved to see thee thump and banged,

We'll all be glad, Great Tom, to see thee hanged.

Bishop Corbet (the son of a gardener) was

fond of a joke, and never too careful of his own dignity. Once, on a market-day, a ballad singer complaining to him of want of custom, Corbet put on the man's leather jacket, and being a handsome person with a clear, full voice, soon sold off the man's songs. Once, when he was confirming, and the country people pressed on him, he shouted to them, "Bear off there, or I'll confirm you with my staff!" It is said that he and his chaplain, Dr. Lushington, used to sometimes visit the wine-cellar. Then Corbet would throw off his episcopal hood and cry, "Lie there, doctor," then his gown, with "Lie there, bishop." Then the toasts went round: "Here's to thee, Corbet," "Here's to thee, Lushington."

At Walsingham the crow, though bound for Cromer, alights for a survey, the quiet town at the foot of the wooded slope having been the great centre of mediæval pilgrimages, and more celebrated even than Becket's tomb at Canterbury. Erasmus came here, when he was professor at Cambridge, sneering safely under the shadow of his hood. He calls it, in his *Colloquies*, "the most celebrated place throughout all England, situated at the extreme coast of England, on the north-west (north-east), at about three miles distance from the sea." He goes on to say that the glitter of gold and jewels at the shrine "made it resemble the seat of the gods." Nor does he forget a gibe or two on the monks in his sly way, when he mentions "the undoubted milk of the Virgin," which had been brought from Constantinople, and looked like chalk, or the dried white of eggs; and the fragments of the true cross, which were so numerous in Europe, that if put together they would load an East India ship. Great, too, was his quiet enjoyment of the fact that the Walsingham monks mistook a Greek inscription for Hebrew. He also listened complacently to his monkish guide, who took him to the old gate-house, still standing, and told him the miracle that had happened there, when, in 1314, Sir Raaf Boute-tourt, a Norfolk knight, being hotly pursued by an enemy, prayed Our Lady for deliverance, and was instantly projected, horse, armour, and all, through a wicket only an ell high and three-quarters broad; the best proof of the miracle being that a brass commemorating the event was to be seen nailed to the gate.

Many of our kings came to Walsingham with cocked hat and sanded shoon, with wallets at their side, and calabashes hanging from their staves. Henry the Third was there in 1248; Edward the First twice—1280, 1296; Edward the Second and Edward the Third also visited the shrine, and in the reign of the latter monarch David Bruce, King of Scotland, and twenty of his knights, obtained a safe conduct to come hither from the wardens of the marches. Henry the Sixth was the next king to seek the Norfolk shrine; Henry the Seventh, too, after keeping his Christmas at Norwich, visited Our Lady's Church at Walsingham, and made his prayers and vows for help and deliverance. When the

battle of Stoke ended the wars of the Roses, and Lambert Simnel fell into his hands, the king, after offering supplications and thanksgivings at Lincoln, sent his banner to be offered to Our Lady of Walsingham, who had graciously answered his prayers for victory. He gave also, at the same time, an image of silver gilt. Henry's burly son inherited the respect of his subtle father for the Norfolk shrine, for in the second year of his reign the young king walked from Barsham, two pebbly miles off, barefoot, to the sacred shrine, and there hung a chain of gold and jewels round the neck of the holy doll, which, years after, was derisively burnt at Chelsea. At the time of the suppression, Cromwell and King Henry's searchers set their faces like flints against this shrine, issuing nineteen articles of inquiry, and pressing cruelly hard these two special bitter questions:

"Whether Our Lady hath done so many miracles nowe of late, as it was said she did when there was more offerings made unto her?"

"Whether Our Lady's milke be liquid or no, and whether the former sexton could not testify that he had renewed the milk when it was like to be dried up?"

Fragments of the ancient ecclesiastical grandeur are still strewn about this Norfolk town. Close by the "Common Place" there is an old domed conduit, with bricked-up niches and the stump of a broken cross; and not far from the station, built up among stables and low sheds, there are remains of the stately house of Franciscan or Grey Friars, founded in 1346 by Elizabeth de Burgo, Countess of Clare.

One side dart to Lynn, not because of its old flint-chequered town-hall, or its venerable Grey Friars' tower, nor for the Chapel of Our Lady on the Mount, nor for the cup and sword King John gave to the faithful town, dear to his heart, but for the sake of a deeper and a more tragic memory. In one of the finest poems of that gentle lover of his kind, Tom Hood, it will be remembered that Eugene Aram, after the crime in the cave by the river-side at Knarsborough, became usher at a school in Piccadilly, and afterwards at one at Lynn, held in an ancient chapel near St. Margaret's, the site of which is now used as a meat market. Here, while the bright-faced children leaped like "troutlets in a pool," brooded,

Apart from all,
A melancholy man,

till that dreadful day came when

Two stern-faced men set out from Lynn,
Through the cold and heavy mist,
And Eugene Aram walk'd between
With gyves upon his wrists.

The crow, scenting the sea air and sea freedom, strikes now with fleet wings for Cromer, where the greedy sea is at its old work, its last bite being a mouthful of twelve acres at once, on a January day in 1825. In the present generation twenty houses have given way on these cliffs. The jetty went in 1820, and a second one in 1835; the shore bath-house was washed off in 1836, and every year the inhabit-

ants have to sullenly fall back before the invading waves that here roll in, unimpeded, the whole way from Spitzbergen. Even the lighthouse has had to retreat from its old enemy two hundred and eighty yards, which is a great concession for a lighthouse, which is always of conservative tendencies. Forty years the geologists give Cromer, and the all-devouring German Ocean is to roll over its conquered opponent, and the bay of "The Devil's Throat" is to roar no more threats at the defiant fishermen. In the mean time, let the Cromer fishermen unload their tiles and coals, and smoke their pipes in peace; at all events they have one thing to boast of, and that is, Roger Bacon, the rugged old mariner who discovered Iceland, and took young James of Scotland prisoner off Flamborough Head, was one of them. If Cromer goes under, as croakers threaten, it will only share the fate of those antediluvian forests, full of elephants' teeth and deers' antlers, that are found in the cliffs close by at Welybourne and Mundesley. The soil of the present was ground out of the fossils of the past.

And now with one quick glance across the sea, that flashes in the sunlight, the crow turns tail and bears straight, steady, and undeviating for his old perch on the black, gold-tipped mountain dome of St. Paul's, his next flight being to the sea southward.

A TRUE STORY OF PRESIDENT LINCOLN.

DURING the summer of the most disastrous and doubtful year of the late American war, the colonel of a New Hampshire Regiment lay for some weeks extremely ill of camp fever, near Hampton Roads, in Virginia. Hearing of his critical condition, his wife left her northern home, and, after much difficulty, made her way to his bedside. Her cheerful presence and careful nursing so far restored him, that he was in a short time able to be transferred to Washington.

In the Potomac River, the steamer in which the invalid officer, Colonel Scott, and his wife had taken passage, was sunk, in a collision with a larger vessel, in the night time. The crew and nearly all the soldiers on board were rescued, or saved themselves; but amid the horrible confusion of the scene, Colonel Scott became separated from his wife, and she was lost. The colonel was picked up in the water by the crew of the larger steamer, and under his direction every effort was made to discover his wife, or rather her body, for all hope of finding her alive was soon abandoned. The sad search was fruitless; it was resumed in the morning, the people along the shore, humane Confederates, lending their aid. But the grey, sullen river refused to give up its dead, and the young officer, half frantic with grief, was compelled to go on to Washington. Within a week, however, he received word from below that the body of the lady had been washed on shore—that those good country people, generous foes, had se-

cured it, cared for it, and were keeping it for him.

It happened that just at that time imperative orders were issued from the War Department, prohibiting all intercourse with the peninsula—a necessary precaution against the premature disclosure of important military plans. So it was with some misgivings that Colonel Scott applied to Mr. Secretary Stanton for leave to return to Virginia, on his melancholy duty.

"Impossible, colonel," replied Mr. Stanton, firmly; "no one can have leave to go down the river, at this time, on any private mission whatever. Our present exigencies demand the most stringent regulations; and I hope I need not say to you that no merely personal considerations should be allowed to interfere with great national interests. Your case is a sad one; but this is a critical, perilous, cruel time. 'The dead must bury the dead.'"

The colonel would have entreated, but the busy secretary cut him short with another "impossible," from which there was absolutely no appeal. He went forth from the presence, and returned to his hotel, quite overwhelmed.

Fortunately, he was that afternoon visited by a friend, to whom he told the story of his unsuccessful application and sad perplexity, and who immediately exclaimed, "Why not apply to the president?"

The colonel had but little hope, but acknowledging that the plan was worth trying, drove with his friend to the White House.

They were too late. It was Saturday evening, and Mr. Lincoln had gone to spend Sunday at Soldier's Rest, his summer retreat. This was but a few miles from town, and the colonel's indomitable friend proposed that they should follow him out, and they went.

There was then a popular belief that all the wronged, the troubled, and suffering could find a refuge in "Father Abraham's" capacious bosom; a belief that was not far out of the way. Yet there were times when overburdened, wearied, tortured, the patriarch longed to clear that asylum of its forlorn inmates, to bolt and bar and double-lock it against the world; times when life became too hard and perplexing for his genial, honest nature, too serious and tragic and rascally a thing by half.

It happened, unluckily, that the poor colonel and his friend found the president in one of his most despondent and disgusted moods. He was in his little private parlour, alone in the gloaming. He was lounging loosely in a large rocking-chair, jutting over it in all directions. His slippered feet were exalted, his rough head was thrown back, his long throat bare—he was in his shirt-sleeves! Yes, dear, fastidious English reader, it was genuine Yankee abandon,—make the most of it!

He turned upon his visitors a look of almost savage inquiry. There was indeed, in his usually pleasant eyes, a wild, angry gleam; a something like the glare of a worried animal at bay.

Colonel Scott proceeded very modestly to tell his story; but the president interrupted

him, to say brusquely, "Go to Stanton; this is his business."

"I have been to him, Mr. President, and he will do nothing for me."

"You have been to him, and got your answer, and still presume to come to me! Am I to have no rest? no privacy? Must I be dogged to my last fastnesses and worried to death by inches? Mr. Stanton has done just right. He knows what he is about. Your demands are unreasonable, sir."

"But, Mr. Lincoln, I thought you would feel for me."

"Feel for you! Good God! I have to feel for five hundred thousand more unfortunate than you. We are at war, sir: don't you know we are at war? Sorrow is the lot of all; bear your share like a man and a soldier."

"I try to, Mr. President, but it seems hard. My devoted wife lost her life for coming to nurse me, in my sickness, and I cannot even take her body home to my children."

"Well, she ought not to have come down to the army. She should have stayed at home. That is the place for women. But if they will go tearing about the country, in such times as these, and running into all sorts of danger, they must take the consequences! Not but that I am sorry for you, colonel. As for your wife, she's at rest, and I wish I were."

Saying this, the president leaned back wearily in his chair, and closed his eyes, not noticing, except by a slight wave of his hand, the departure of his visitors.

I am not ashamed to confess that my hero tossed restlessly that night, upon a pillow wet with manly tears, that he was desperate and resentful, utterly unresigned to the decrees of Providence and the War Department, and that he thought Abraham Lincoln as hard as he was ugly, and as inhumane as he was ungainly.

Toward morning he fell asleep, and slept late. Before he was fully dressed, there came a quick knock at the door of his chamber, and he opened to President Lincoln!

The good man came forward, pale and eager, tears glistening in his eyes, and grasped the colonel's hand, saying, "I treated you brutally last night. I ask your pardon. I was utterly tired out, badgered to death. I generally become about as savage as a wild cat by Saturday night, drained dry of the 'milk of human kindness.' I must have seemed to you the very gorilla the rebels paint me. I was sorry enough for it, when you were gone. I could not sleep a moment last night, so I thought I'd drive into town, in the cool of the morning, and make it all right. Fortunately, I had little difficulty in finding you."

"This is very good of you, Mr. President," said the colonel, deeply moved.

"No it isn't; but that was very bad of me, last night. I never should have forgiven myself, if I had let that piece of ugly work stand. That was a noble wife of yours, colonel! You were a happy man to have such a noble woman to love you; and you must be a good fellow, or such a woman would never

have risked so much for you. And what grand women there are in these times, colonel! What angels of devotion and mercy, and how brave and plucky!—going everywhere at the call of duty, facing every danger! I tell you, if it were not for the women, we should all go to the devil, and should deserve to. They are the salvation of the nation. Now, come, colonel; my carriage is at the door. I'll drive you to the War Department, and we'll see Stanton about this matter."

Even at that early hour, they found the secretary at his post. The president pleaded the case of Colonel Scott, and not only requested that leave of absence should be given him, but that a steamer should be sent down the river, expressly to bring up the body of his wife. "Humanity, Mr. Stanton," said the good president, his homely face transfigured with the glow of earnest tender feeling, "humanity should overrule considerations of policy, and even military necessity, in matters like this."

The secretary was touched, and he said something of his regret at not having felt himself at liberty to grant Colonel Scott's request in the first place.

"No, no, Mr. Stanton," said the president, "you did right in adhering to your own rules; you are the right man for this place. If we had such a soft-hearted old fool as I here, there would be no rules or regulations that the army or the country could depend upon. But this is a peculiar case. Only think of that poor woman!"

Of course, the "impossible" was accomplished.

To the surprise of the colonel, the president insisted on driving him to the navy yard, to see that the secretary's order was carried out immediately; seeming to have a nervous fear that some obstacle might be thrown in the way of the pious expedition. He waited at the landing till all was ready, then charged the officers of the steamer to give every attention and assistance to his "friend, Colonel Scott." With him he shook hands warmly at parting, saying, "God bless you, my dear fellow! I hope you will have no more trouble in this sad affair—and, colonel, try to forget last night."

Away up in a New Hampshire churchyard there is a certain grave carefully watched and tended by faithful love. But every April time the violets on that mound speak not alone of the womanly sweetness and devotion of her who sleeps below—they are tender and tearful with the memory of the murdered president.

LOOKING BACK.

THIS is the old farm-house

With its deep, rose-tangled porch,

Where hover and rise white butterflies,

And honey-bees hold debauch.

Oh, many a time and oft

In the dear familiar cleft,

With a lifted eye to the summer sky

I have followed the lark aloft!

And my heart, my heart, flies back

On the dead years' shadowy track,

And now in the lane, on a loaded wain,

I'm a happy and hot little boy again!

Just such a windless noon

As this, in a buried June,

When the scented hay in the meadows lay,

And the thrushes were all in tune,

On the staggering load I, exultant, rode,

And the red-faced waggoner "wey'd" and "woe'd"

Long ago in a buried June!

Days when to breathe was bliss,

Perfect, and pure, and strong;

No pulse of the heart amiss,

No beat of the brain-work wrong:

When care was a word, and love an absurd

Fabrication of story and song.

Is it so long ago,

This life of colour and light?

Will it not show some after-glow

Ere the day dips into the night?

O youth, have ye left me quite?

O years, have ye dimmed my sight?

Lo, the light is shade, and the colours fade,

And the day dips into the night.

HAPPY JACK.

"WHY are you called Happy Jack?" I inquired of a very worthy man of my acquaintance; a man of the people; a man in a fustian jacket; with good thick substantial shoes on his feet, a wide-awake on his head, a blackthorn walking-stick in his hand, a wallet at his back, and a short black pipe in his mouth. He slowly removed his pipe to answer me.

"The people all calls me Happy Jack," he said. "It seems to please them, and doesn't do me any harm. But my name, as you may have perhaps heerd, is not Jack, but Giles; and a very good name too. But Jack somehow or other stands to being honest and handy; and that's why they call sailors Jacks, I suppose. And a Jack-of-all-Trades means a clever chap as can turn his hand to anything. And when people calls me Happy Jack, I suppose they mean it as a compliment. And as the world goes, I am happy enough. Anyhow I never complain. I make a pretty fair living; and I don't mind telling you, that I've laid by a little bit of money in the savings bank, and shan't come upon the union if I grow ever so old and worn out. The secrets of my happiness are a good wife, a good appetite, a good conscience, and a business as I likes and sticks to; and which, if I were proud, which I ain't, I might call a perfection. I would not change it for ne'er another business in the world."

Hereupon he put his pipe into his mouth again, drew several whiffs, and meditated.

I knew Giles's business well enough, and knew also that he took a pleasure in it; as I took a pleasure sometimes in hearing him talk about it. Giles, whom I shall call Happy Jack, as more descriptive of

his character than his legal and baptismal cognomen, was a wandering herbalist, or gatherer of simples, and somewhat of a physician in his humble fashion among the poorer order of farm-labourers and cottagers. He was a diligent student of botany, the botany of the meadow, the garden, and the road-side; with Nature for his first great teacher, and old Nicholas Culpeper, student in physic and astrology, for his guide and universal referee.

An ancient edition of Culpeper, entitled *The Complete Herbal* [with nearly four hundred medicines made from English herbs, physically applied to the cure of all disorders incident to man, with rules for compounding them; also directions for making syrups, ointments, &c. &c. &c., and bearing for its motto on the frontispiece the Bible text, "And he spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall"] was the constant companion of Jack's wanderings. A well-thumbed, greasy, time-stained, dog's-eared book it was; and annotated by hundreds of marks, not illegible to Jack, though looking very like Egyptian hieroglyphics to all eyes but his own. In the pursuit of herbs, such as the herbalists sell in most of the great towns and cities of England; which the homœopathic chemists will sometimes purchase, to revend in infinitesimal doses; which hospitals require for the purposes of plasters and poultices; and which poor women of the old school, though young perhaps in years, are fond of using as infallible nostrums for their own ailments, and those of their husbands and children, Jack made regular circuits into the midland, southern, eastern, and western counties of England; from Margate to the Land's End in one direction, and from Warwick to Southampton and Portsmouth in another. A sturdy man he was, about sixty years of age, though as hale and hearty as if he had been but forty, and with an appetite, never very small, that had been kept large by fresh air, daily exercise, and a mind at ease. He was an educated man in every thing except the education of books, the great Culpeper alone excepted; and able to discourse on many things hidden from the philosophy of people who, had they been brought into juxtaposition with him, might have considered themselves to be very much his superiors.

"What simples are most in request, now-a-days?" I inquired of him.

"Well, I can't say exactly," he replied; "but I think there has of late been more call for henbane, deadly nightshade, and briony, than there used to be. The homœopathic doctors"—so he called them—"makes great use of all these herbs, and so does the other doctors too, I believe. Mighty useful herbs they be, every one on 'em."

"All poisons?" I said.

"Poisons!" he said, emphatically. I knew he would take exception to the word, and used it of malice prepense. "Poisons!" he repeated. "There are no poisons in the world, and everything is a poison if you don't know how to use it. Beef is poison, if you eat nothing else for breakfast, dinner, and supper; and bread is poison, and taters uncommon pisonous. Henbane is pison, ne'er a doubt, if you swallow an improper dose of it; and so is deadly nightshade, it has a flower uncommon like the flower of the tater; and white briony, one of the prettiest and handsomest things as grows, with fingers as fine as a lady's, has a root as well as a berry, as is good for more ailments than I can count on my ten fingers. Poisons! Look here!" he said, stretching his hand towards the meadows and the woods beyond them, "there's not a herb, or flower, or weed, if there be anything as grows as deserves to be called a weed, that you could pluck in a long summer's day, as is not good for summut or other. Only men, as a rule, are so ignorant! The very dogs and cats knows better than some men; and when they are unwell after eatin' too much stuff as is not good for 'em, they goes to the herbs appointed for 'em by God Almighty, and eats 'em, to purge out the ill-humours. And the rooks and the crows too, after they have gorged 'emselves with worms and grubs, knows where to go for physic, and eats nettle seeds. They can't afford to pay doctors, and they doctors 'emselves, as men might do, if they looked into Culpeper as much as they ought. I don't like to hear the plants and herbs called poisons and weeds. There's no such thing as a real pison. Milk is pison if, instead of drinking it, you cuts a vein open and pours a drop or two in. Some herbs are pison out'ardly, and some are pison in'ardly. But not one as grows, I don't care what the doctors say, is pisonous in itself, if you knows how to use it, and the right quantity to take. Poisons indeed! I don't believe, wise as people think 'emselves in our day, wî their steam engines and electric telegraphs, and all the rest of the new-fangled contrivances

that we hear on every day of our lives, that we have found out half the virtues of the plants; no, nor a tenth part of 'em. It's my belief that Nebuchadnezzar, when he ate grass, took a physic as was good for him, and that there is a great deal more virtue in grass than the world knows on, with all its wisdom. For of all 'herbs,' is not grass called in Scripture the herb of the field, as if it was, which I sometimes think it is, the best as well as the commonest of all the herbs? I've many a time wished, when I've seen a dog a eatin' on it, as I could ax him what he was a doin' it for. Of course I *can* ax the dog the question, but by wuss luck I can't get his answer. The only fault in old Culpeper as ever I could find is, as he says nothing about grass. If I was a scholard and could write as well as him, or only half as well for the matter of that, I'd write about grass myself. I knows, because I've tried, that what the people calls mountain-grass is a certain cure for the rheumatics, that is to say, the tea or broth made of it by boiling. And it's my opinion that there isn't any kind of grass as isn't good for man as well as beast, only, as I said before, men are, for the most part, such fools, and has to be taught what the beasts knows without teaching."

"Have you any particular favourite of your own among the simples you gather?" I inquired; "any one more valuable than the rest in your opinion, and of a greater benefit to mankind?"

"Well, I dunno! I can't tell. So many on 'em 'deserve honourable mention,' as they used to say of things sent to the Great Exhibition, that I can't fix upon any one in particular. Now, there's poppy, for instance. What a blessing poppy is, let alone its juice in the shape of lodnum and opium, which brings the blessed sleep to the weary eyes and brains of many a sick man and woman as couldn't get a wink without it; but as a relief to swelling and inflammation of every kind. There's the common field poppy, now," and Jack (we were walking along the road as we discoursed) stooped to gather one as he spoke, "which some folks calls the corn-rose, is good for more things than causing sleep. Hear what old Culpeper says about it. I have it all by heart. 'The wild poppy, or corn-rose, is good to prevent the falling sickness. The syrup made with the flowers is with good effect given to those *that have the pleurisy*; and the dried *flowers also, either boiled in water, or*

made into powder, and drank, either in the distilled water of them, or some other drink, worketh the like effect. The distilled water of the flowers is held to be of much good use against surfeits, being drank evening and morning. It is more cooling than any of the other poppies, and effectual in hot agues, frenzies, and other inflammations, inward or outward.' Ah!" added Jack, in corroboration of what his great master had said, "poppy's quite as good in its way as the corn that it grows among; though the farmers doesn't know it. Then, again, there's chickweed and grunsel, that the London people take such mighty cart-loads of every week to feed their singing birds, but which are quite as good for men and women as for goldfinches and canaries."

I suppose that I looked doubtful on this point, for Jack went on with renewed earnestness: "I tell you chickweed and grunsel is good for many kinds of sickness. I knows it, and Culpeper says it; and surely *he* knowed. 'Chickweed,' he says, 'is a fine, soft, pleasing herb, born under the dominion of the moon.'"

"Why of the moon?" I inquired.

"Every plant as grows," said Jack, with as much gravity as a judge when laying down the law, "grows under the influence of the sun, or the moon, or its own particular planet. That's positive! Many grows under Venus, many under Mars, and many under Saturn. What plant was I talking on? Chickweed. Yes! chickweed belongs to the moon. And, as you might, perhaps, not believe me, hear what Culpeper says. 'This herb bruised, or the juice applied with cloths or sponges dipped therein, to the region of the liver, doth wonderfully temperate the inflammation thereof. It is effectual for all swellings and imposthumes; for all redness in the face, wheals, pushes, itch, and scabs. The juice, either simply used, and boiled with hog's lard, and applied to the part, helpeth cramps, convulsions, and palsy. The juice or distilled water is of much good use for all heats and redness in the eyes, to drop some thereof into them. It is good, also, in virulent sores and ulcers of the leg and any other parts of the body. The leaves boiled with marsh mallows and made into a poultice with fenugreek and linseed helpeth the sinews when they are shrunk by cramp or otherwise.' That's what Culpeper says of chickweed, which you may see is not sent by a kind Providence for the birds only. And 'grunsel'

(grunsel) is just as good, if not better; for grunsel is under the dominion of Venus. I shan't tell you what I think of it, 'cause you might think I was a exaggerating, or that I was a drawin' on my fancy, which I assure you I never does in the matter of any plant, big or little, common or uncommon. Culpeper was in love wi' grunsel, I do believe. He says, 'This herb is Venus's masterpiece, or mistress piece, and is as gallant and universal a remedy for all diseases coming of heat, in whatever part of the body they may be, as any that the sun shines upon. It is very safe and friendly to the body of man; yet causeth vomiting if the stomach be affected, if not, purging, which it doth with more gentleness than might be expected.' Old Culpeper didn't like the doctors, they got the guineas out of people in his time, as they do in ours, a vast deal too easily. 'Lay by your learned Latin receipts,' he says; 'about so many grains of senna, and scammony, and colocynth, and crocus metallora, and grunsel alone in a syrup, or distilled water, shall do the deed for you in all hot diseases, speedily and safely. Nor is this all; it is excellent for jaundice, the cholic, sciatica, and the gravel.' In short," added Jack, "it's about the best physic as goes."

I plucked a nettle as Jack concluded, with a gloved hand, and asked him, "Has this vile thing any virtue?"

"Vile thing," he responded indignantly. "Why vile? it is one of the best plants as grows; a prime gift of God to poor ungrateful human kind. Call a nettle vile! But you don't mean it, I know you don't! Bless your heart, the nettle is good for scores of diseases. Mars is the lord of it; for the nettle like Mars is fiery. Nettle broth is good for shortness of breath, and the asthma; look into Culpeper and see if it isn't good also for pleurisy and sore throat; good for the gravel; good for worms in children; and as I've heerd say, and believe, good for the sting of adders and pisonous snakes; and the bite of mad dogs. Nettles! why you can make beer of 'em, and very good beer too."

I think Jack would have gone on for an hour or more about the nettles had I not stopped to pluck a daisy as Jack finished his laudation, and offering it to him, asked if there were any medicinal properties in that, and under what planet he supposed daisies to be born?

"Suppose them to be born?" he replied, "I know them to be born under Venus."

Culpeper says so. That's enough for me. As for the virtues of the daisy, it has lots an' lots. Its juice distilled is good for the liver complaint. For ulcers in the gums, the lips, or the tongue, it is the best thing in the world. But look to Culpeper if you want to know more; all I say is, that its leaves and flowers as well as its juice, is good for inflammations and swellings, and ease the pains of gout, rheumatism, and sciatica. I gather cart-loads of daisies every year and sells 'em; and many a poor old hedger and ditcher, or his poor old wife, troubled with the rheumatics can get as good a remedy for their ailment for a pennorth of daisies, as they could have got from the queen's own doctor, if they had paid him a guinea fifty times over. And how kind and bountiful God Almighty is," said Jack, with a feeling of real piety, surging up in his simple heart, "to make all the good things of this world so common. Fresh air now! what a good physic and medicine is that! And free to the poorest creature as crawls, if he will only crawl out from his hole and condescend to breathe it. And sunshine! What is so good as sunshine? I have often thought to myself that if I had the value in my pocket of one day of sunshine in harvest time, that I should be the richest man in all the universal world! Not that I wants to be the richest man in the world, or rich at all for that matter. For if I was rich, could I eat my dinner with a better appetite than I do now? And sleep better o' nights? And have more pleasure in my long walks? Not that I objects to a little bit of money, mind ye, by no means. But when I hears of people scrapin', and scrapin', and scrapin' up money, and cheatin' other people so as they may scrape deeper and pile up higher, and never enjoyin' themselves a bit, or even so much as laughin' except when they have diddled somebody, I thinks as money may be bought too dear, and that them's the happiest folks, who takes a little pleasure as they goes, doesn't cheat nobody, and thinks more of the sunshine out o' doors, at least once in a way, than they does of a good bargain."

"Well, Jack," I said, "you enjoy yourself, any how. You always seem happy, and I know you are strong."

"Well," he replied, "it's a grand thing to enjoy your business, if it be a innocent one. And mine is innocent, and I likes it. Lord love ye! I would not be a tailor, a carpenter, a shoemaker, or a shopkeeper, for all the money the queen could offer me."

I love the open air, the road-side, the path through the woods and meadows, or by the river. I love to hear the birds singing, and to see the herbs and plants a growing; and to feel at the same time that they are all a growing for me, and that I know how to use 'em, and make a decent and a honourable living out of 'em. And then you see, I'm different from a farmer. He has to sow afore he can reap. I never sow, and I always reaps. The wind and the birds sows the seeds for me, and they grow without my care, and for my benefit; the rain soaks 'em and the sun ripens 'em, and all for me, because I know what they are, what they can do, and where I can look for 'em when I want 'em."

"You told me," I said, "that you made a good living by this business of gathering and selling simples. Would you think it rude in me if I asked you how much you earn on the average in a week, or whether from year's end to year's end you are as well paid as a gardener or a farm labourer?"

"There's ne'er a gardener or farm labourer in all England as I would change places with," answered Jack, somewhat contemptuously. "Farm labourers get ten or twelve shillings a week, and gardeners eighteen or twenty and their beer. If I did not earn five times as much as any farm labourer, or, at least, three times as much as any gardener as ever mowed a lawn, or dug a potato, I should think my business was a going to the dogs. Farm labourers, poor things, know very little, and gardeners doesn't know much; and it stands to reason, as I know more than they, that I should make a better living than they do. Howsomever, that's neither here nor there. I like my business, and my business likes me; and I wouldn't change it—no, not to be Archbishop of Canterbury!"

Good bye, Happy Jack! Long may you flourish! You deserve your name!

FAREWELL TO AN ARTIST.

THE career of JOHN PARRY, a thorough artist who has amused the English public without intermission for thirty-five years past, and more—during a larger part of the time amused it single-handed—is not to be closed without a few words of retrospect and cordial recognition. We could wish, perhaps, that it might have closed without the attendant commonplace of a "Testimonial," for it has always been above such ordinary things.

The son of an estimable Welsh harpist, who did much to make the delicious and symmetrical melodies of the Principality popular in

England, John Parry seemed destined at his entrance into life, to follow the footsteps of his father. But he followed them with a difference, presenting himself not merely as a player on the most graceful, but most limited of keyed and stringed instruments, but likewise as a singer; possessing a light but agreeable bass voice, perfectly well trained, and great musical readiness. It was not till he had been before the English public for a considerable period as a sentimental Welsh melodist, an accessory singer in oratorios, and a reciter of such a lugubrious platitude as Napoleon's Midnight Review, that he could indicate the number of strings to his bow, and that the exhibition of these established for him an individuality, unique in the annals of English music.

Comedy in music has until now, as a subject, been carelessly touched. Apart from words conveyed by voice and aided by personation and gesture, it is a matter of no common difficulty to express anything like intrinsic humour by the aid of a language so vague as the musician's. Much of his descriptive effect must be owing to association. "Nothing," says a German writer, "lies so far from music as irony." And yet a man with a fine sense, and a fine touch, and a fine command of the gamut of his art, may, within limits, suggest no less than illustrate, without a servile use of conventions "made and provided for," or direct imitation.

Proof of this will be found in the irresistible whimsicalities with which John Parry made a public for himself, after working for years in a groove which his eccentric genius obviously unfitted him to fill with any hope of progress. There is something in his talent akin to Thomas Hood's, a grotesque and quaint drollery, to the utterance of which in music he brought the accomplishments of a first-class pianist, delicacy of touch, variety of tone, volubility of execution. The "calmest and most classical" of musicians (to quote Mrs. Jarley) delighted to hear his drolleries on the piano, for their own sake, as heartily as the less deeply learned portion of his audience, who were convulsed by the mother "of the accomplished young lady," or his personification of that never-to-be-forgotten hostess, Mrs. Roseleaf.

This possession of technical science and accomplishment as a singer and a pianist, both subservient to a thorough sense of enjoyment of characteristic whimsicality, separate John Parry from all other comic entertainers who have preceded him. The skill with which, by rapid and certain changes of singing voice, he could suggest concerted music; with which by speaking, the free use of three languages being granted, and by gesture, he could conjure up the idea of a crowd, could not be exceeded; if (as may be doubted) it has ever been equalled. There was the complete artist, in all his mirth; more than one published collection of "Ridiculous Things," a book of sketches, attests that he commanded the pencil

as well as the key-board. Though the humour of his sketches is generally grim and dry, the cleverness of many of them, and the correctness of hand displayed, are not to be overlooked, as so many ingredients which helped to make up a whole, that there is small chance of seeing reproduced.

During the earlier period of John Parry's humorous career, he was associated with Albert Smith, as the contriver of his drolleries. It must be noted that by neither word, look, nor sign, had either author or actor, in their freest moments of fun, one second's recourse to the coarse allusions and appeals, which were too generally introduced in former days, to spice washy comedy, or to give the finishing touch of "breadth" (so ran the jargon) to dramatic personation. But in this, both author and interpreter, may be said to have followed, as well as helped to lead, the improved taste of our middle classes. Double entendre is to be seen sparingly in our theatres and concert-rooms pretending to any respectability, save when they are imported from foreign parts, shameless in rouge, blazing with diamonds, and (pro pudor!) caressed and patronised by those who ought to lead, and not lag behind, the intelligence and refinement of the class beneath and, in this respect, above them.

THE TRYST IN TWIN-TREE LANE.

At midnight between the ninth and tenth of May, 18— (it is less than thirty-five years ago), there occurred a meeting which, whether for the incongruity of its constituent elements, the difficulties with which it was encompassed, its gloom and mystery, or its actual purpose, has, to the best of the writer's belief, no parallel in social history.

During the period that has since elapsed, many minor particulars have come to light, and supplied the materials for as circumstantial a narrative of this singular transaction as the most curious inquirer could desire.

On the evening of the eighth of May, that is, the day preceding the incident about to be related, the family of Mr. Newton Horsfall, of Cowling Priors, Herts, noticed something unusual in that gentleman's demeanour.

Mr. Horsfall was the representative of an old and loyal county family. Though of somewhat quiet and retiring habits, he was an active county magistrate, and, the previous year, had served the office of high sheriff. Aged, at this period, about forty-eight, he had married seven years before a lady twenty years his junior, by whom he had a son and daughter.

At dinner, on the day above mentioned, Mr. Horsfall's disturbance seemed to increase. He ate but little, was silent and abstracted, and, contrary to his wont, appeared relieved when his wife's departure left him to his own meditations. He moved restlessly in his chair, got up and paced the room, and, finally, sitting down at a bureau that stood in a corner of

the room, fell to examining some papers he selected from its contents. These he divided into two portions, one of which he tore up to the minutest particles, the other he placed under seal and restored to its former place. It was known at an after period that he had also opened and reperused his will.

This done, he rested his head on both hands and resumed his anxious meditations. Suddenly he spoke aloud.

"I will—yes, I will do it. Yes, come what may, the reproach of being absent shall not attach alone to me. Let danger, let what is worse, ridicule, attend this proceeding, I am of a race that keep their faith, and—"

"Newton!" said a gentle voice, and a white hand glistened on his shoulder. "I have not been your wife for seven years," resumed Mrs. Horsfall, "without learning to read your face. You have a trouble, dear; the first, I hope and believe, you have not permitted me to share. Forgive my eavesdropping. My anxiety was intolerable. What has happened?"

Mr. Horsfall smiled.

"Happened, my love? Nothing, nothing in the world. The worst is—the very worst is, that—that—I must leave you for some thirty-six hours, and that, unfortunately this very night."

"To-night!"

"I understand your consternation, my dear," said her husband, trying to speak lightly; "we have people to dinner to-morrow, and unless they would consent to wait till six in the morning, my Lucy must be host and hostess too."

"Oh, Newton, it is impossible!"

"Try."

"But will you tell me nothing more?"

"Every word, dear; but not now."

"Newton, I have a petition to make to you."

"Speak it, love."

"Take me with you."

"Not if—ahem—my dear, it is impossible," said the magistrate. "You must remain to receive our friends, and assure them that nothing short of business that would not brook an hour's delay, compelled me to be absent from my post. Now, if you love me, not another question. Ring the bell, like a sensible woman, and order the carriage at four."

"Four in the morning?" ejaculated Mrs. Horsfall, faintly, and burst into tears.

"The idea is terrible," said the magistrate, smiling; "but take courage. Duty calls."

"May I go with you part of the way?"

"To London? Certainly, if you wish it. All the way."

It was not in his very gentlest accents that Jacob Gould, the coachman, acquainted his pampered horses with the astounding fact that they were required to turn out of their comfortable nests, as he himself had done, at four in the morning. As for Mr. Horsfall himself, now that he had apparently resolved upon his course of action, he grew more cheerful, and jested gaily with his wife as he put her into the carriage. At the top of Regent-street he

stopped the carriage and beckoned to a hackney coach.

"God bless you, my love!" he cried, leaning from the window; and, adding a word of direction to the driver, was jolted away.

"Where did your master say, Robert?" asked Mrs. Horsfall.

"Why to 'seller, Piccadilly, 'm." retorted Robert, with a slight cough, meant to intimate that travelling so early did not agree with him.

"I will alight here also," said Mrs. Horsfall. "Let the carriage be put up for an hour or two. You and Jacob get some breakfast, then return home, and see that the letters I have left be delivered immediately. I shall not be back till to-morrow, with your master. Call that coach."

"Piccadilly," was the direction she gave, but, stopping the coach in a minute or two, she asked the driver what was the White Horse Cellar.

"Place wheer the Brighton coaches plies from," was the answer.

"Drive to the Elephant and Castle," said Mrs. Horsfall, "and be quick."

"Is there a Brighton coach about to start?" Mrs. Horsfall inquired, eagerly, as they mingled with the mass of coaches which, at that period, congregated round the well-known hostel.

"Yes, 'm, the Age, in a moment;—one inside?" telegraphed a porter to the Brighton driver, who nodded.

Mrs. Horsfall was in her place in a moment, and whisking along through Tooting, half an hour ahead of her husband, supposing, indeed, he had taken that road. But she was far from content with herself. Twenty times, during the journey, she wished the step untaken. As often she succeeded in persuading herself that her disobedience was pardonable, and preferable, whatever its consequence, to the anxiety she would have had to endure; for that her husband was bound on an expedition of danger, she entertained no manner of doubt.

It was a period of discontent, and much uneasiness. From causes not necessary here to recal, the working classes in several counties had allowed themselves to be moved to serious outrage. Incendiarism was the order of the day, or night, and it was no uncommon thing to see the horizon lit up in twenty places with the fires that guilty hands had kindled. Everywhere there was a vague apprehension of a visit from the "mob," which noun of multitude was supposed to be prowling about, burning and pillaging the houses of the rich, and, in more than one instance, justifying the fear. Mrs. Horsfall trembled, as it occurred to her that her husband's excursion was connected with the repression of these disturbances.

She had resolved upon her course of action; and, accordingly, quitted the coach at a small hotel at the very entrance of Brighton, at which most of the coaches halted for a moment. Here she obtained an apartment facing the road, and, shrouded in the curtains, set herself

to scrutinise the passengers of each vehicle, as they successively arrived.

The vigil was tedious, but, at six o'clock, her patience was rewarded. As the Red Rover dashed up to the door, the familiar face was discernible at the coachman's side.

Mrs. Horsfall had concluded that he would certainly go on to Castle-square, and had prepared herself to step into a fly, and follow. To her astonishment, however, if not alarm, he quietly descended, obtained his valise, and entered the same modest hostel in which his wife had already taken refuge.

In the course of the evening, Mrs. Horsfall, by skilful inquiry, contrived to learn that the magistrate had dined, by himself, in the coffee-room, had subsequently smoked a cigar, and, that finished, gone to the play!

"To the——" Mrs. Horsfall had some difficulty in checking her ejaculation of surprise.

But the gentleman would return at eleven; only the porter was not to go to bed, as he was going out again, and might be absent some hours.

Mrs. Horsfall's heart gave a throb.

"That is it, then," she murmured, and sunk into trembling meditation. In this condition we must leave her, and repair to another part of the country.

Doctor S., who at this time presided over an important inland diocese, and was in the prime of intellectual, if not physical life, was a man who never spared himself in his Master's service. It was therefore an unmistakable token of overtaxed energies, when the bishop, sinking into his chair on the evening of the seventh of May, acknowledged that a brief respite from labour would not be unacceptable to him. His wife caught at the idea. For the last few days, a sort of harassed look, not habitual with him, had attracted her attention. He wanted rest.

"How I wish, my dear," said Mrs. S., "that you could escape, if it were but for four or five days, from *all* hard work! Now I really think that, with the assistance you can command, and——"

"My dear, you anticipate my thought," the good bishop replied. "Nothing would recruit me more effectually than a fair three days' holiday, exclusive of the travelling; a little unfatiguing journey, some whither—say, towards the sea. I ought, yes, certainly, I ought to do it," he added, half to himself.

"That you ought!" exclaimed his wife, triumphantly. "I shall order William to prepare your things, so that, if you please, we can leave this very day."

"Gently, gently, my dear," said the bishop. "'We!' nay, nay; I must not take all my comforts with me, and expect to find health to boot. It is enough that I find rest, and—change. I shall make my little expedition entirely alone."

"Alone!" echoed Mrs. S. "My dear, I shall be so nervous."

"On behalf of which of us, my love?" inquired the bishop, laughing. "Come, come,

of the highway are reduced to a As regards the perils of damp loubtful fare, I can make your I shall ask the hospitality of my Meadows, at their pretty place, and occupy the bachelors' room." you will take Charles?" as the bishop's nephew, his chap-tary.)

hesitated. It was clear he pur-e gone alone, but his wife's tone revealed. Moreover, he was very phew.

ll, Charles shall go."

ff that day, and the next, May saw them, to the delight of their and hostess, comfortably estab-thurst Dene. Mrs. Meadows was, tle disappointed next morning, ght reverend guest announced, utance, that a business engage-essing nature would compel him self for that evening and night, ould return early on the morrow. is destination was Brighton, the no further particulars, and, the g but eight miles, the carriage red till four o'clock, at which anied by his nephew, he took his He had made a feeble effort to faithful companion, but Charles ly reminded him of the promise exacted from him, not to lose bishop till the latter returned in ie prelate had given way.

drive, their conversation turned te of the agricultural districts. en some threatening of disturberal incendiary fires visible from t the presence of a large cavalry latter place kept the fashionable at their ease, as regarded a visit b."

ng through the village of Ports-op began to scrutinise the locality uest.

spots," he observed, "in which icalment would not be difficult uided persons, should these ample upt them to fresh crime. We are a still more broken—— My l the bishop, taking advantage e walking up a hill to accost a is at hand, "do you know Cold—and—and Twin-Tree-lane?" o," said the man, "whereby I've stone better nor twenty years. ie left, handy."

nainder of the drive the bishop meditative. They were quickly when the bishop drove to the imissed the carriage, and ordered

line together. Charles, at seven," s nephew; "the evening is at posal, for my work, which may me to a late hour, admits of no nterference."

There was an emphasis on the latter words that forbade remonstrance. But the Reverend Charles Lileham was sensible of an undefined anxiety which induced him to resolve that, happen what would, he must not let his honoured relative wander far from his sight. It was a little before eleven when the bishop, suddenly rising, put on his greatcoat, took his hat and stick, and affectionately pressing his nephew's hand, walked quietly forth alone.

That night, the ninth of May, was a festival one at Brighton. A gentleman of the highest distinction, in his line, was receiving the compliment of what might be justly called a "public" dinner, inasmuch as it was held at the Clenched Fists, Birdcage-lane, North-street, and was open to any gentleman interested in the matter to the amount of three-and-sixpence, liquors not included.

It was well attended, for Mr. William Boekes, far better known as the "Bradford Dumpling," retired champion of England, was the son of a much-respected yeoman farmer in the vicinity, and, though making Bradford the city of his adoption, had never forgotten the peaceful village that gave him birth. The heads he had punched in youth were, like his own, tinged with grey—for the Dumpling had attained the (for the ring) patriarchal age of forty-five—but his visits were hailed with undiminished enthusiasm, and, moreover, this ninth of May was the anniversary of the last great triumph of his professional career.

The festivities were prolonged to a late hour. At that disturbed period it was felt that the usual loyal toasts should be received with double honours, if not with double draughts, and it was past ten o'clock before the chair-man arrived at the great toast of the evening.

A song (patriotic), and another (pugilistic), with choruses to both, wound up the evening; when, as closing time approached, it was proposed to escort the ex-champion to his private residence in Burr-alley, West-street, givo him three cheers, and dismiss him to his slumbers. But to this little attention the Dumpling opposed a strenuous opposition. He preferred walking home quietly, alone and unrecognised, indeed he was *not* going home, leastways, not yet. He had an engagement beyond the town, Patcham way, and it was near upon the time. To the playful comment of one of his friends that it was a "rum start," the Dumpling merely responded with a wink. To another, a little fluttered with drink, who affectionately insisted upon bearing him company whithersoever he was bound, the Dumpling offered just sufficient personal violence to disable him from doing anything of the sort, and, having at length shaken off his friends, strode away. It was at this time nearly half-past eleven.

The same evening Colonel Spurrier, commanding the gallant Hussar regiment at that time occupying Brighton barracks, had dined at the mess. The circumstance was not of frequent occurrence, the colonel being a married man, and having a house in Brunswick-

square. During the meal a letter, bearing the police official seal, was delivered to him. The colonel read it with a serious look, but not till later in the evening did he communicate the contents to the officers present. It seemed that the authorities had been warned of the probability of a meeting of the chief promoters of discontent, at some spot near Brighton, and, fearing that the ordinary civil force might prove insufficient to effect the capture, the magistrates requested that a small military detachment might be held in readiness to act in case of need.

The colonel supplemented his information by issuing the necessary directions, and added that he should himself sleep in barracks that night, although, for the next two hours at least, he must unavoidably be absent.

"Perhaps," he added, smiling, as he threw on a cloak and lit his cigar, "I may bring back some information of the enemy's movements. I am not going into the town."

"Permit me, sir," said the young adjutant, "to recommend you not to go entirely unarmed. Your face is known, and if these lurking rascals are in earnest——"

"Well, well; lend me your pistols, Baird," said the colonel, and, thrusting them into his pocket, walked away.

The clock struck eleven as the sentry at the gate saw the colonel suddenly quit the high road, and strike across the rising grounds in rear of the barracks.

Another event of some interest had signalled this especial evening, the ninth of May, at Brighton. That admirable comedian, Mr. L., had wound up a starring engagement of six nights, with a benefit that attracted nearly all the play-going world of that gay watering-place. He had acted in three pieces with unsurpassable humour, marked, however, as the night drew on, with a haste and excitement unusual with him, and which did not escape the notice of his fellow-performers. He was perpetually glancing at his watch; fell into quite a passion at a trifling delay between the second and last pieces; ordered a fly to be in waiting at the stage-door, and, the moment the curtain fell (it was then full half-past eleven), threw himself, dressed as he was, into the vehicle, and, calling out "Patcham! quick!" drove furiously away, disregarding the very treasurer, who, with his hands full of notes and gold, stood prepared to settle accounts with the fortunate star, in order that the latter might start, as he proposed, early on the morrow.

The traveller who passes old Brighton church, and, crossing the top of the hill, takes a by-path on the right, leading in the direction of Patcham, would, thirty years ago, have traced the windings of a very pretty rural lane, bordered on the one hand by beech and chestnut trees, on the other by a high bank, beyond which corn-fields stretched away in the direction of the Dyke downs. Half way down the lane, the path, widening for a few yards, left room for a rude seat, which was under the immediate shelter and protection of two large

beech-trees, so precisely similar in shape and size, as to have imparted to the path in question the title of Twin-Tree-lane. It was, at the time of which we speak, a sequestered place enough, and was approachable alike from the high road through Patcham, and from that which crosses the Old Church-hill.

It was a few minutes only short of midnight, on the eventful ninth of May, that a lady, muffled in a cloak and hood, stopped her carriage at the entrance of Patcham, and, desiring the driver to await her return, struck across the fields to the left. The night was fair and still; with occasional bursts of radiance, as the moon struggled from one blue-black cloud-bank to another.

Whenever this occurred the lonely wanderer strained her eyes to the utmost, as if in search of some receding object, but seemingly in vain.

At last she paused, and gave a sudden sniff. "Thank heaven!" she exclaimed, clasping her hands in real thankfulness. "That is his pipe! I should know it among a thousand. He must be close before me."

In effect, she fancied she could discern her husband's form not far in advance, and, shrinking closer into the shadow of the hedge, she continued to follow him. At the mouth of what was apparently a wooded lane the guiding shape suddenly disappeared! Mrs. Horsfall hurried forward, and, pausing to listen, thought she could now hear both the step and voice of her husband. He was passing up the lane, evidently with one or more persons, but with little thought of danger, for she heard his frank laugh ring through the quiet air.

"If they should have betrayed him into some ambush!" thought the anxious wife. "He is so unsuspecting!"

The party a-head seemed to make a sudden halt. Instinctively, Mrs. Horsfall shrank toward the border of trees, and, in doing so, almost came in contact with a man who was stepping from them. Fortunately, she did not cry out, and the manner, unmistakably gentlemanly, in which the stranger tendered his apologies, at once disarmed her fears. He looked at her, however, with a little astonishment, hesitated, then, as if a thought had struck him, said:

"Is it possible, pray forgive me, that we are here on a similar errand? My name is Lileham, Charles Lileham, a minister of the church."

"Mine is Horsfall," said the lady, quickly. "I—I am in some anxiety about my husband, who is just before us, in company with I know not what dangerous and desperate men. O, what shall we do?"

"For the inoffensive character of one, at least, of his companions, I am prepared to answer," said the young clergyman, with a smile. "It is the Bishop of L., my uncle."

"The bishop!"

"Of his business here at this hour, I am as completely ignorant as you apparently are of Mr. Horsfall's. I fear I am transgressing his wishes in following him thus closely."

"Hark! There are more voices!" exclaimed Mrs. Horsfall. "They seem raised in anger."

"In amusement, rather, if I mistake not," said Mr. Lileham. "But come: if you will accept my guidance, you shall see what is passing. They have assembled under those two large trees. Will you permit me to show you the way?"

Mrs. Horsfall assented. In less than ten minutes they had reached the point indicated by Mr. Lileham. A bright stream of moonlight was pouring right into the recess canopied by the twin trees, and made the singular party therein assembled distinctly visible. It was composed of five individuals, seated on the curved bench, engaged in earnest and animated discussion. In the centre might be recognised the reverend and stately form of the Bishop of L., immediately on whose right sat the Bradford Dumpling, supported in his turn by Mr. Newton Horsfall, of Cowling Priors, Herts. On the left of the prelate might be seen the familiar, mirth-awakening lineaments of Mr. L., the celebrated low comedian, flanked by the commanding presence of Colonel Reginald Spurrier, of the —th Hussars.

The subject of their conversation was manifestly of the deepest interest. Of what could they possibly be talking? And why—oh, why this mystery? Mrs. Horsfall saw that her companion was as puzzled as herself, and that his countenance had become very serious indeed.

Suddenly they saw the colonel start to his feet. A horse-tramp approached from below, and his quick ear had been the first to catch the sound.

"I fear we are suspected," he said aloud. "Listen. I thought so. They are upon us from both sides!"

And in truth, next moment, an armed horse-patrol rode in from either side, and halted in the front of the party beneath the trees.

"Pleasant night, gentlemen," said the first patrol. "Curious time, though, to be sittin' here, ain't it?"

Mr. Horsfall conceded, in the name of himself and friends, that it *might* seem a curious time, but inquired what business that was of the officer's?

"My business is to obey orders, that's all," replied the man. "And one of 'em is to perwent any gatherings at night we don't know the meaning of. It's our duty, gentlemen, to demand your names and occupations, preparatory to requesting you to move on."

"The man is right," said the bishop. "I could have wished it otherwise, but the fault is our own. My friend, I am a churchman. My name is S., Doctor S., Bishop of L."

"Wery likely," was the reply. "And this here gent" (pointing to the Dumpling) "he's the Lord Mayor of London, I suppose?"

"Come, my man, you are mistaken," said Colonel Spurrier, striding out into the full moonlight. "If you are unacquainted with the face of the reverend gentleman, perhaps you know mine?"

He took off his hat.

"Colonel Spurrier!" cried the men, saluting.

"This is Mr. Horsfall, a magistrate of Hertfordshire," resumed the colonel. "My other two friends are already known to you."

"I beg your pardon, gentlemen," said the patrol. "There was notice give, you see, of a hillegal meeting to-night, near Brighton, and seeing parties pinting this way, we thought we was down upon 'em. Whatever *you* was adoin' here's best known to yourselves."

"Stay," said the bishop; "I feel that some fuller explanation is needed. Whatever jesting comments our meeting may provoke, I for one am content to bear them, for the pleasure it has afforded me. Have I your permission, gentlemen, to state the facts?"

Every one consenting, the bishop continued:

"We five whom you find assembled here, were in early youth schoolmates at an establishment situated at no great distance from the spot on which we stand. Twin-Tree-lane, as I find it is still called, was a favourite half-holiday resort. Here we discussed our school affairs, or speculated upon the wide uncertain future that awaited us in the tumult of the world. The death of our excellent master caused the sudden dispersion of the school, and it was on the evening before the general departure that we five, sitting together under our favourite trees, entered into a solemn agreement to meet, if God permitted, that day *thirty* years, at the same spot at midnight, with the purpose of declaring how Providence had hitherto dealt with us in our several ways of life, and comparing our actual experiences with the brilliant hopes of boyhood.

"So far asunder have our duties separated us (I myself for some years presided over a colonial see, and my friend, Colonel Spurrier, has served in India) that for the whole period of thirty years no two of us have ever met together, nor, indeed, so far as I am aware, held communication of any sort. It was a doubt with me whether every member of the party had not long since forgotten this boyish compact. There were also the difficulties that might have arisen, if remembered, in keeping it. But the solemnity with which it was made had left upon my mind, as it did upon others, an abiding impression. My pledge had been given and never withdrawn. I thought of the possibility of one of us, at least, faithful to his word, groping his way hither in the faint hope of grasping an old friend's hand, and finding only darkness and a void. I was altogether wrong and mistrustful; here we are, all five, grateful for many mercies, cordially rejoicing to have met again; and, if our vocations in life have been widely diverse, I may, I think, say with truth, that we have wrought in them with honesty and singleness of purpose, without wrong to any, in thought, word, or deed. You are satisfied, my friends?"

The officers bowed, and apologising for their interference, prepared to move on.

"Not a word," said the bishop; "you have

only done your duty. Good-night, and may you meet with no less loyal and peaceable men than you have surprised here."

"Here are two more watchers to be forgiven," said a voice familiar to the bishop, as two figures, male and female, suddenly descended into the road, and Mrs. Horsfall, bathed in tears, threw herself into the arms of her astonished husband, while Mr. Lileham, in a few words, explained the anxiety which had prompted their pursuit. Anger was out of the question; a general laugh announced that all was forgiven. Only the bishop attempted to frown, and that was a failure.

WRECKED IN PORT.

A SERIAL STORY BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP."

BOOK III.

CHAPTER XIII. THE RESULT.

THE second day after Mrs. Creswell's visit to Helmingham, Walter Joyce was sitting in his chambers, hard at work. The approaching change in his condition had affected him very little indeed. He had laughed to himself to think how little. He would have laughed more had he not at the same time reflected that it is not a particularly good sign for a man to be so much overwhelmed by business or so generally careless as to what becomes of him, as to look upon his marriage with very little elation, to prepare for it in a very matter-of-fact and unromantic way. That no man can serve two masters, we know; and there are two who certainly will not brook being served at the same time by the one worshipper—love and ambition. Joyce had been courting the latter deity for many months with unexampled assiduity, and with very excellent success, and, in reality, had never swerved in his allegiance. The love which he felt for Maud Creswell differed as much from the passion with which, in the bygone years, Marian Ashurst had inspired him, as the thick, brown, turgid Rhine-stream which flows past Emmerich differs from the bright, limpid, diamond-sprayed water which flashes down at Schaffhausen; nevertheless there was "body" in it, as there is in the Rhine-stream at Emmerich, sufficient to keep him straight from any of the insidious attacks of ambition, as he soon had occasion to prove.

Not that the news which Gertrude Benthall had confided to him in regard to Lady Caroline Mansergh had touched him one whit. In the first place, he thought Gertrude had deceived herself, or, at all events, had misconstrued the feelings by which Lady Caroline was actuated; and

in the second, supposing the girl was right, and all was as she believed, it would not have had the smallest influence in altering anything he had done. He was not a brilliant man, Walter Joyce, clever in his way, rather lacking in savoir-faire; but he had a rough, odd kind of common sense which stood him in better stead than mere worldly experience, and that showed him that in his true position the very worst thing he could have done for himself would have been to go in for a great alliance. Such a proceeding would have alienated the affections and the confidence of all those people who had made him what he was, or rather who had seen him struggle up to the position he enjoyed, and given him a helping-hand at the last. But it was because he had struggled up himself by his own exertions that they liked him, whereas any effort in his favour by the aid of money or patronage would have sent them at once into the opposition ranks. No, Lady Caroline was still the kindest, the dearest, the best of his friends! He found a letter from her on his return to chambers, full of warm congratulations, telling him that she was compelled to follow the medical advice of which she had spoken to him, and to leave London for a few weeks; but she hoped on her return to welcome him and his bride to Chesterfield-street, and retain them ever on the very narrow list of her chiefest intimates. He was engaged on a letter to Jack Byrne when there came a sharp, clear knock at the door; such a different knock from that usually given by the printer's boy, his most constant visitor, that he laid down his pen, and called, "Come in!"

The handle was turned quietly, the door was opened quickly, and Marian Creswell came into the room.

Walter did not recognise her at first; her veil was half over her face, and she stood with her back to the light. A minute after, he exclaimed, "Mrs. Creswell!"

"Yes, Mr. Joyce; Mrs. Creswell! You did not expect me."

"I did not, indeed. You are, I confess, one of the last persons I should have expected to see in these rooms."

"No doubt; that is perfectly natural; but I come on a matter of business."

"As does every one who favours me with a visit. I cannot imagine any one coming here for pleasure. Pray be seated; take the 'client's chair.'"

"You are very bright and genial, Mr. Joyce; as every successful man is."

"As every man ought to be, Mrs. Cres-

well; as every tolerably successful man can afford to be."

"I suppose you wonder how I found your address?"

"Not the least in the world. Unfortunately I know too well that it is in the archives of the Post-Office Directory. Behold the painful evidences of the fact!" and he pointed to a table covered with papers. "Petitions, begging letters, all kinds of unreadable literature."

"Yes; but I don't study the Post-Office Directory, as a rule."

"No; but you looked at it to-day, because you had an object in view. Given the object, you will not hesitate to depart from your usual course, Mrs. Creswell."

"I will not pretend to ignore your sarcasm, nor will I say whether it is deserved or undeserved; though perhaps my presence here just now should have induced you to spare me."

"I did not mean to be sarcastic; I simply gave utterance to a thought that came into my mind. You said you came on a matter of business? I must be rude enough to remind you that I am very busy just now."

"I will detain you a very short time; but, in the first place, let us drop this fencing. You know my husband is dead?"

Joyce bowed.

"And that I am left with a large, a very large, fortune at my disposal?"

"I heard so, not merely when I was down at Helmingham the other day, but here in London. It is common talk."

"You were down in Helmingham the other day? Ah, of course! However, suppose I had come to you to say—" and she paused.

Joyce looked at her with great composure. "To say!" he repeated.

"I must go through with it," she muttered beneath her breath. "To say that the memory of old days is always rising in my mind, the sound of old words always ringing in my ears, the remembrance of old looks almost driving me mad! Suppose I had come to say all this; and this besides, share that fortune with me!"

"To say that to me!"

"To you!"

"It is excessively polite of you, and of course I am very much flattered, necessarily. But, Mrs. Creswell, there is one thing that would prevent my accepting your very generous offer."

"And that is—"

"I am engaged to be married."

"I had heard some report of that kind;

but, knowing you as I do, I had set very little store by it. Walter Joyce, I have followed your fortunes, so far as they have been made public, for many months, and I have seen how, step by step, you have pushed yourself forward. You have done well, very well; but there is a future for you far beyond your present, if you but take advantage of the opportunity which I now offer you. With the fortune which I offer you—a fortune, mind; not a few thousand pounds such as you are anticipating with Maud Creswell, but with a fortune at your back, and your talents, you may do anything; there is no position which might not be open to you."

"You are drawing a tempting picture."

"I am drawing a true one; for in addition to your own brains, you would have those of a woman to aid you: a woman, mind, who has done for herself what she proposes to do for you; who has raised herself to the position she always longed for—a woman with skill to scheme, and courage to carry out. Do you follow me?"

"Perfectly."

"And you agree?"

"I think not. I'm afraid it's impossible. I know it's not an argument that will weigh with you at all, or that, perhaps, you will be able to understand; but you see, my word is pledged to this young lady."

"Is that all? I should think some means might be found to compensate the young lady for her loss."

Walter Joyce's face was growing very dark, but Marian did not perceive it.

"No, it is not all," he said, coldly; "the thing would be impossible, even if that reason did not exist."

She saw that her shaft had missed its mark, but she was determined to bring him down, so tried another.

"Ah, Walter," she said, "do you answer me like this? In memory of the dear old days—"

"Stop!" he cried, bringing his hand down heavily on the writing-table before him, and springing to his feet. "Stop!" he cried, in a voice very different from the cold polite tone in which he had hitherto spoken: "don't name those times, or what passed in them, for in your mouth such allusions would be almost blasphemy. Marian Creswell—and the mere fact that I have to call you by that name ought to have told you what would be my answer to your proposition before you came here—perhaps if I were starving I might take an alms of you, but under no other circumstance would I touch a farthing of that

money which you pride yourself on having secured. You must have been strangely forgetful when you talked to me, as you did just now, of having 'raised yourself to the position you always longed for,' and of having 'skill to scheme and courage to carry out' what you desire. You forgot, surely, that in those words you reminded me that you longed for your present position while you were my promised wife; and that you were bringing your skill and your courage to work to obtain it, while I was striving, and hoping, and slaving for you."

"We had better put an end to this interview," said Marian, attempting to rise. "Ah, Walter, spare me!"

"Spare you!" he cried in unaltered tones. "Did you spare me while all this was going on? Did you spare me when—" he opened a drawer at his side and took out a folded paper, "when you wrote me this cruel letter, blasting my hopes and driving me to despair, and almost to madness? Spare you! Whom have you spared? Did you spare those girls, the nieces of the kindly old man whom you married, or, because they were in your way, did not have them turned out of his house, their natural home? Did you spare the old man himself, when you saw him fretting against the step which you had compelled him to take? Whom have you spared, whom have you not over-riden, in your reckless career of avarice and ambition?"

She sat cowed and trembling for a moment, then raised her head and looked at him with flashing eyes.

"I am much obliged to you Mr. Joyce," she said in a very hard voice, "I am much obliged to you for permitting me to be present at a private rehearsal of one of your speeches. It was very good, and does you great credit. You have decidedly improved since I saw you on the platform at Brocksopp. Your style is perhaps a little turgid, a little bombastic, but that is doubtless in accordance with the taste of those of whose sentiments you are the chosen and the popular exponent. I must ask you to see me to the cab at the door. I am unaccustomed to London, and have no footman with me. Thanks!" And she walked out of the door which he had opened for her, with a volcano raging in her breast, but with the most perfect outward composure.

See the curtain now about to drop on

this little drama—comedy of manners, rather—where nothing and no one has been in extremes; where the virtuous people have not been wholly virtuous; and where the wickedest have had far less carmine and tinsel than the Author has on former occasions found a necessity to use. There is no need to "dress" the characters with military precision in a straight line, for there is no "tag" to be spoken, no set speech to be delivered, and, moreover, the characters are all dispersed.

Gertrude and her husband are in their seaside home, happy in each other and their children. Walter and his wife are very happy, too, in their quiet way. He has not made any wonderful position for himself, as yet; but he is doing well and is highly thought of by his party. Dr. Osborne has retired from practice, but most of the Helmingham and Brocksopp folk are going on much in their usual way.

And Marian Creswell? The woman with the peaked face and the scanty hair turning grey, who is seldom at her own house, but appears suddenly at Brighton, Bath, Cheltenham, or Torquay, and disappears as suddenly, is Marian Creswell. The quarry of impostors and sycophants, she has not one friend in whom to confide, one creature to care for her. She is alone with her wealth, and it is merely a burden to her, but has not the power of affording her the smallest gratification.

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ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED

"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 37. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 14, 1869.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

VERONICA.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE."
IN FIVE BOOKS.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER V. AN INVOLUNTARY GUEST.

By this time Mrs. Sheardown had enveloped herself and Bobby in waterproof wrappings. Maud Desmond was waiting, warmly protected by a thick shawl, at the vicar's elbow. Herbert Snowe shut and locked the harmonium. Every one was preparing to depart.

"Veronica!" called the vicar.

Miss Levincourt was still conversing with Mr. Plew.

"Veronica!" repeated her father, impatiently, "are you not coming?"

She turned round at the summons, giving her hand in a farewell grasp to the doctor as she did so.

She was very handsome.

The first thing that struck you on looking at her face, was its vivid colouring. Her skin was of a clear, pale, brown tint; and on each smooth cheek there glowed a rich blush like the heart of a June rose. She had large, dark eyes, fringed round with thick lashes, and surmounted by semicircular eyebrows, black as ebony. Her hair was also black, shining, and very abundant. It was disposed in elaborate coils and plaits, which displayed its luxuriance to the full, and was brought down low on the forehead in crisp waves. Her lips were very red, and her teeth very white. There were defects in the form of her face. But the brilliant eyes, glancing under their arched brows, so attracted attention to themselves, that few observers were dispassionately critical enough to observe that the lower part of the face overbalanced the

upper; that the nose was insignificant; the mouth so full as to be almost coarse; and the cheeks and chin so rounded as to threaten to lose all comeliness of outline, and to become heavy in middle life. Now, however, at nineteen years of age, Veronica Levincourt was a very beautiful creature. But there was something in her face which was not so easily analysed by a casual observer as the form and colour of it. There was a dissonance in it somewhere. Most women perceived this. Many men did so also. But they perceived it as a person with a good ear, but ignorant of harmony, perceives a false note in a chord. Something jars: what, he knows not. The skilled musician comes and puts his finger on the dissonant note.

When Veronica laughed, her whole countenance grew harmonious at once. And herein lay the key to the puzzle.

The habitual expression of her face in repose seemed to contradict the brilliant glow of youth and health which made her so strikingly beautiful. The rich gipsy colour, the ripe red lips, the sparkling eyes, the gleaming teeth, seemed made to tell of light-hearted, abounding, girlish happiness. But the expression of Veronica's face when she let it fall into its habitual lines, was wistful, sad, sometimes almost sullen.

For the rest, her figure was slight and straight, and she carried herself with an erect and yet easy grace.

"Coming, papa," said she, carelessly. And then she gathered about her shoulders a scarlet cloak with a hood to it.

"You should have had your shepherd's plaid, Veronica," said her father. "That red thing is not nearly warm enough for such an evening as this."

"O, it is so becoming to Miss Levin-

court," said little Miss Turtle, the governess. She and her pupils had been watching Veronica unwinkingly all the afternoon, as their custom was.

The choir of St. Gildas dispersed. The Sheardowns drove away in their little pony-carriage, carrying with them Herbert Snowe, who usually stayed with them on Saturday evenings. Miss Turtle took her pupils, one on each arm, and her grey cloak and shabby hat with its black feather disappeared down the lane. The vicar, with his ward and his daughter, walked in the opposite direction towards their home.

The nearest way to the vicarage house was across St. Gildas's churchyard. But the melted snow lay in death-cold pools between the swelling grave-mounds, and although the lanes afforded no good walking in the present state of the weather, they were yet rather better than the way by the churchyard.

Mention has been made of a by-road through the village from Shipley Magna which skirted the garden wall of the vicarage. Mr. Levincourt and the two girls had not gone many paces down this by-road, when they perceived through the fast-gathering dusk a figure, which had evidently been on the watch for them, start and run towards them very swiftly.

"I do believe it is Jemmy Sack!" exclaimed Maud Desmond.

Jemmy Sack it was, who presently came to a sudden stop in front of the vicar, and began a breathless and incoherent speech.

"Dunnot ye be frightened, please sir, Joe Dowsett says. They ha'n't a took him into the house, please sir. And it's the same un as I seed tumble off afore. On'y this here time he's in a reg'lar swoond like. But Joe Dowsett says as ye bain't to be frightened, nor yet the young ladies nayther, please sir."

Long before the combined cross-examination of the vicar and the young ladies had succeeded in eliciting any explicit statement from Jemmy, they arrived at the garden door, and then the matter to a certain extent explained itself.

A man in a scarlet hunting coat thickly crusted with mud lay on his back in the road beneath the garden wall, and close by a heap of flint stones piled up for the use of the road-menders. On to these he had apparently been flung, for his face was cut, and a thin stream of blood trickled slowly down his forehead.

The prostrate man was totally insensible. His head was supported on the knee of Joe

Dowsett, the vicar's gardener, groom, and general factotum, who was endeavouring to pour some brandy down his throat. A carter, in a smock-frock, held a handsome horse by the bridle. Three of the village boys who had been practising in the school-room stood at a little distance looking on, and two frightened women-servants, with their aprons huddled round their shivering shoulders, peeped nervously from the garden door, and plied Joe Dowsett with shrill questions, of which he took no notice whatever.

A clamour of voices arose as soon as the vicar was perceived: but a few words will suffice to put the reader in possession of the facts of the case. The fallen man was the same gentleman whom Jemmy had seen thrown earlier in the day. The day's sport had terminated at a considerable distance from Shipley Magna. The gentleman was a stranger, had probably missed his way, and gone by roundabout roads. He had evidently at last been making for Shipley Magna, having struck into Bassett's-lane, as the by-road was called. His horse and he were both tired out, and he had begun to feel the effects of his first fall more severely than he had felt them in the heat of the chase and at the beginning of the day. The carter had perceived the gentleman's horse stumble, and at the same instant the boys returning from the school-house had appeared shouting and whooping at the end of the lane. In a moment the gentleman had been pitched heavily off his horse, and had fallen on the heap of flint stones. The carter couldn't say for sure, but he believed that the horse stumbled before the lads startled him. And now what was to be done? This question was put by Joe Dowsett, looking up at his master with the brandy bottle in his hand.

The first thing to be done was to send for a doctor. Mr. Plew would probably not have reached his own home yet. Jemmy Sack was despatched to fetch him, and set off running at a famous rate, throwing out his long legs, and followed by the other boys, to all of whom the occasion seemed to be one of intense and concentrated ecstacy.

But pending Mr. Plew's arrival, the swooning man could not lie there, with the night falling fast, and a bitter wind blowing from the marshes, that was fit, Joe Dowsett said, to freeze the very marrow in your bones.

There was no other house at hand. The

vicarage was a lonely, isolated dwelling. Joe Dowsett and the carter, with a little assistance from Mr. Levincourt, carried the stranger into the house. The women hurried to take from an old oaken press, blankets and coverlets for the spare bed. A fire was lighted in the guest's chamber—a room on the ground-floor, looking towards the garden. For that night at least, the injured man must remain at the vicarage.

Mr. Levincourt was very uneasy, and asked Joe over and over again if he thought it was serious? To which queries Joe invariably replied that it might be or it mightn't, but that for his part he didn't think 't wouldn't be much: an oracular utterance in which his master seemed to find some comfort. Veronica sat at the window, straining eye and ear to catch the first signal of the doctor's coming.

"He's quite old, this poor man, isn't he, papa?" said she, with her face pressed against the glass.

"Old? No. What do you call 'quite old?' It is difficult to judge under the circumstances, but I should say he can't be more than fifty."

"Ah! well—that's what I meant. Here is Mr. Plew at last! I hear his step on the gravel, although I can't see him yet."

Mr. Plew's opinion was not very reassuring. If the patient were not better by to-morrow, he should fear that he could not safely be moved for a day or two. Meanwhile Mr. Plew would like Dr. Gunnery of Danecester to be called in, in consultation.

When Dr. Gunnery arrived on the following afternoon, he shook his head very gravely, and said that he had no hope of the patient being able to leave his bed for some weeks. Even if—and here Dr. Gunnery lowered his voice, and reversed the movement of his head: nodding it up and down instead of shaking it from side to side—even if he pulled through at all!

CHAPTER VI. SUSPENSE.

THE vicar's first thought on hearing Dr. Gunnery's opinion, was that it behoved him (the vicar) to communicate with the family of the stranger whom Fate had thrown—literally thrown—into the midst of the quiet household at the vicarage. As it was, they could hardly have known less about him, had he dropped among them from the moon, instead of from the back of a startled horse.

But for many hours the injured man was incapable of communicating with his host. Fever set in. He became delirious at

intervals. And on no account must he be disturbed or annoyed by questions. Dr. Gunnery confirmed Mr. Plew's first statement, that no irreparable injury had been done to the stranger by his fall.

"But," said he, "he is a bad subject. If we had a young constitution, or even a sound constitution for his years, to deal with, the whole affair would be a mere trifle. But in this case it is very different."

"Very different, indeed," assented Mr. Plew.

"No stamina," continued the Danecester physician. "The whole machine is in a worn-out condition—constitution gone to the deuce."

"To the —ahem! quite so!" assented Mr. Plew, again.

"Then, Dr. Gunnery," said Mr. Levincourt, nervously, "do you mean to say that he is in danger? Dear me, this is dreadful! Really dreadful!"

But to so direct a question Dr. Gunnery could, or would, give no direct reply. He merely repeated that in his opinion Mr. Levincourt ought to lose no time in communicating with the sick man's family. And then, saying that he would return the day after to-morrow, and that meanwhile the patient could not possibly be in better hands than those of Mr. Plew, the great Danecester doctor drove away.

Beyond the facts that had come under his own eyes, the vicar knew but two circumstances regarding his involuntary guest. The first circumstance was, that he had been staying at the Crown, in Shipley Magna; the second was, that Lord George Segrave was said to be a friend of his.

Mr. Levincourt despatched a note to Lord George, and ordered Joe Dowsett (to whom the note was entrusted), to ride on from Hammick Lodge to Shipley Magna, and tell the people at the Crown what had happened.

From Hammick Lodge, Joe Dowsett brought back a very polite note.

It appeared that the acquaintance between Lord George Segrave and the stranger was of the slightest possible kind. They had met in Rome one season, and had hunted side by side on the Campagna. Lord George knew nothing whatever of the gentleman's family. His name was Gale, Sir John Gale. Lord George was deeply distressed that the vicar of Shipley and his family should be so seriously inconvenienced by this accident. At the same time he could hardly regret, on Sir John Gale's account, that the latter should

have fallen into such hands. Lord George would do himself the honour of calling at Shipley vicarage, and meanwhile he begged to know if there were any way in which he could be of service, either to Mr. Levincourt or to the invalid, under these painful circumstances.

This note, although extremely civil, left matters pretty much as they had been before. But from the Crown Inn, Joe Dowsett brought back something more tangible and unexpected.

He brought back, that is to say, Sir John Gale's foreign servant, who announced himself as "Paul," and who immediately took upon himself all the duties of waiting on the sick man.

"If you will permit, sir," said Paul, in very good English, "I will have a mattress laid by the side of my master's bed for a few nights. When Sir John gets better, and needs not to have me all night, I shall find to sleep at the village. There is a small cabaret there, as I have informed myself."

The arrival of this man, which was at first looked upon with dismay by the inmates of the vicarage, proved before long to be an inestimable comfort and relief.

In the first place, he eased the vicar's mind by taking upon himself the responsibility of communicating with Sir John's friends. Or rather he proved that no such responsibility existed. Sir John had, Paul declared, no relatives. He had neither wife nor child, brother nor sister, uncle nor cousin. He had lived a great deal abroad. Paul had not been with Sir John in England, before this winter. He would write to Sir John's agent and man of business. That was all that would be necessary.

Mr. Levincourt, never unwilling to shift responsibility on to the shoulders of others, told Paul that he must do as he thought best. There was something in the grave, steady aspect of the little man that inspired confidence. Then Paul took upon himself the whole business of the sick room. He waited by day, and watched by night. He administered the medicines. He reported progress to the doctors, with an intelligence and accuracy which won those gentlemen's good opinion very soon. He relieved the vicar's servants of all trouble as regarded Sir John Gale. He even went into the kitchen, and, with a certain grave tact which characterised him, won over old Joanna to allow him to prepare sundry articles of invalid diet for his master. He

was always at hand when wanted, and yet entirely unobtrusive. He was never tired, never sleepy, never sulky, never indiscreet.

In a word, before many days of his sojourn at the vicarage had passed over, the whole household began to wonder how they had managed to get through the few hours that had intervened between the accident, and the arrival of the admirable Paul.

He very soon contrived to let it be understood that money expenses would not at all events be added to the burthen thrown on the vicar's family by his master's accident and illness. Sir John was rich: very rich. No expense need be spared. If, even, it were deemed necessary to send to London for additional medical assistance, they need not hesitate to do so. This, however, did not appear to be desirable. And as soon as Sir John was enabled to understand his own condition, he expressed himself entirely satisfied with the skill and care of the doctors who were attending him.

Lord George Segrave fulfilled his promise of calling. Lord George was a bachelor. He was a great sportsman, and some folks said that he was too fond of other pursuits which persons holding strict views could not approve. Lord George was well known on the turf; and in his youthful days had been a patron of the Prize Ring. Without belonging to the category of those whose lives were openly scandalous, he yet was a man whose acquaintance could by no means be taken to be a certificate of good character.

Retired as was Mr. Levincourt's life at Shipley-in-the-Wold, he yet knew this much of the present occupant of Hammick Lodge, and the knowledge had not served to make Sir John Gale's enforced presence beneath his own roof the more agreeable to him.

But Lord George Segrave soon made it apparent that his acquaintance with Sir John was really and truly no closer than he had stated in his note. It need scarcely be said that Lord George had no idea what a signal service he was rendering to the invalid in his host's opinion, by disclaiming anything like intimacy with the former.

Lord George was rather good-natured, and extremely selfish, and he desired that it should be at once clearly understood that while he was willing to send his servants scouring the country on any errand for Sir John that the vicar might suggest, he (Lord George) by no means

intended to put himself to the personal inconvenience of making frequent visits of inquiry at the vicarage.

"Pray command me, Mr. Levincourt," he said, as he took his leave, "in any way. I quite feel what an uncommon bore this business must be for you. Though, as I said before, Gale may think himself in luck that he didn't get spilt on any other heap of flint stones than the one at your door. I'm sure I hope he'll pull through, and all that sort of thing. You know I had only just a kind of bowing acquaintance with him in Rome. And then he hailed me on the hunting-field at Stubbs's Corner the other day, you know, and—and that sort of thing. Hammick Lodge is twelve miles from Shipley as the crow flies, you know, and—and so I'm afraid I shan't be able to look him up myself very often, you know. But I hope you will do me the favour to command me if there's anything in the world my fellows can do, or—or that sort of thing."

And then Lord George Segrave departed, feeling that he had done all that could reasonably be expected of him.

Dr. Gunnery came again and again. And Mr. Plew was unremitting in his attentions.

The house, always quiet, was now hushed into stillness. The piano remained closed. Joe Dowsett ceased to whistle as he worked in the garden. The servants stole up to bed past the door of the guest-room, making every board of the staircase creak under their elaborately cautious footfall. Paul's noiseless step glided through the passages, and he came on you like a ghost.

Riot and merriment are contagious. So are silence, and the hush of suspense. But though the vicarage was stiller than it was wont to be, it was less dull. All the household was conscious of a suppressed excitement, which was merely stirring, and did not reach to pain. Every day, every hour of the day, presented a question whose answer was deferred—Will he live or die? And on the answer to this question hung no agonised human heart—none, at least, within that house.

Was there anywhere a breast fluttered by hopes, oppressed by fears, for the sick man who lay feverish and uneasy on the stranger's bed in Shipley vicarage?

No letters came for him. No friends inquired.

He was discussed in the vicarage kitchen, and in other kitchens in the neighbourhood.

He was discussed in the village ale-house, in the farm-houses, in the tap-room and the stables of the Crown at Shipley Magna. He was spoken of, once or twice, at the different meets of the West Daneshire hunt. Lord George Segrave mentioned that he believed Gale was going on all right, you know, and that sort of thing. That was a niceish nag of his, not the one he had been riding when he was thrown, you know; no, that little chesnut. Lord George wouldn't mind having him. He wondered what the figure would be. If Gale's horses were still at the Crown, he had a good mind to go over and have another look at the chesnut, and to ask Gale's groom whether he thought his master would sell him. He supposed that Gale had had enough of hunting in England. He was doosed sorry for him, you know, and that sort of thing, but what the — could he expect? With that seat, he (Lord George) only wondered how Gale had been able to stick on his saddle five minutes! And most of the field wondered too. For it has been observed that of all the trials to which human candour, modesty, and magnanimity, are ordinarily apt to be subjected, the trial of comparing your own riding with another man's is the one that most frequently develops mortal frailty.

There was probably not a man who habitually hunted with the West Daneshire, who did not secretly nourish the conviction that his own seat on horseback was admirable, and that the majority of his friends and acquaintances rode like tailors!

Little it mattered to Sir John Gale what was said of him in parlour, kitchen, stable, or hunting-field. Little, perhaps, would it ever matter to him more. For although, as Dr. Gunnery had said, the absolute injuries resulting from the accident were trifling, and to a young and vigorous constitution would have been matters of small importance, yet in this case there seemed to be no elasticity, or power of rebound in the sick man's frame. A low fever took hold of him: a dreadful insidious fever, that might be figured as a weird phantom invisible to the eyes of men, but with two bony cruel hands, whose touch was terrible. Of these hands, one was cold as ice; the other burning, like the heart of a furnace. Alternately the viewless fingers stroked the sick man's body, drawing long shuddering thrills through every limb; or clutched him with a lingering gripe that made his very heart sick. Now, he was consumed

with scorching heat; anon, he shivered to the marrow of his bones.

Mr. Plew did not trouble his brain—or perhaps it were better to say his brain was not troubled; seeing that such fancies come to a man, or stay away from him, without any conscious exercise of his will—with any fantastic embodiment of a Fever Phantom. But he reported day after day, that Sir John was in a nasty low way—a *ve-ry na-asty*, low way—and that he couldn't get him to rally.

"Do you think he is troubled in his mind?" asked Mr. Levincourt. "Is his heart ill at ease? He is perfectly conscious now; and, I think, clear-headed enough to give orders. And yet Paul tells me that his master has entirely approved what has been done, and what has been left undone. He desires to see no one; has received no letters—except, as Paul tells me, one from his agent sent to the Post Office at Shipley Magna—and, in short, appears to be singularly isolated in the world, for a man of his wealth and position. I should fear his life has not been a very happy one."

"Well," said Mr. Plew, musingly, "I don't know, of course. But—but he doesn't seem to me to be at all that sort of man."

Mr. Plew's statement was vague enough: and the vicar did not care to be at the pains of probing the little surgeon's meaning. Yet the latter had a meaning, although he would have found it difficult to put it into clear words.

His meaning was this; that from his observation of Sir John Gale, he had, half instinctively, drawn the conclusion that his rich patient was not a man to allow sentimental troubles to prey on him.

Wounded love, tender regrets, affectionate yearnings after a lost friendship, or a longing for softer tendance and closer companionship than could be had from servants and strangers, did not seem to Mr. Plew likely to enter into the category of drawbacks to Sir John's recovery.

Material comforts, nay luxuries, he did not lack. As to sentiment—Mr. Plew of course had encountered ailments arising from purely spiritual causes. Very troublesome ailments they were, and very inefficacious proved the power of physic to cure them. He remembered a saying of an old clergyman who had been a famous preacher in the days when Benjamin Plew was walking the hospitals in London. The saying was to the effect that the bodily health of half the world

would be marvellously improved, if a mechanical cunningly contrived piece of granite could be substituted for a heart of flesh in the human breast. "We might defy the doctors then," said this old clergyman, "and—life would not be worth having!" But of Sir John Gale, neither Mr. Plew nor the reader, as yet knows enough to enable him to judge whether the baronet's heart be of flesh or of stone.

A fortnight passed: three weeks: a month had nearly dragged itself away since the accident, when the doctors pronounced that Sir John was somewhat stronger.

The phantom hands, the hand of fire and the hand of ice, slowly relinquished their prey. By degrees the intervals between their alternate touches grew wider. At last they ceased. Danger was over; and from the beginning of March, the invalid began slowly, but surely, to mend.

WHAT BECOMES OF THINGS?

WHAT becomes of the enormous quantity of objects, natural and artificial, which are daily, weekly, monthly, annually, perennially, produced and sent forth into the world?

What becomes (to plunge in *medias res*) of all the pictures which our painters paint, and exhibit, at the metropolitan and provincial exhibitions, season after season, year after year? We see them at the Royal Academy, at the Asylum for Rejected Contributions to the Royal Academy, at the Water-colour Galleries, and at all the other Art Exhibition Rooms. What becomes of them all? Of some of them—the best—we know the fate. They go into the hands of certain collectors in the manufacturing districts who luckily have a taste for art. Of some others we also know the fate. They hang up in the studios of our friends who painted them. Sometimes, again, we come upon one in some carver's and gilder's shop. But where are all the rest? Where are the views of "Bettws-y-coed" and of "Loch Coruisk," the production of which has necessitated long journeyings and much sitting out under white umbrellas? Where are the representations of Dead Game, the Italian Peasants, the "Studies of Heads"?

The books, again, what becomes of them? These come out in legions, season after season, representing, in addition to an enormous amount of labour of different kinds, a considerable accumulation of actual material: of paper, of metallic types, of ink, of millboard, of cloth, of leather. What becomes of all this matter? What sort of proportion do the number of books that are sold, bear to those that are brought out? And, again, of those that are sold, what becomes? Those that we see on the

shelves of libraries, or even lying about upon tables and chiffonniers, are but a small percentage of the number continually issuing from the press. What becomes of the thousand-page novels which appear, in great numbers, in the course of every season? How does it happen that our rooms are not entirely surrounded with full book-shelves, or that there exists in any apartment, hall, or passage, any vacant portion of flat space unoccupied by books on which to put things down? Hundreds of thousands of volumes are cast upon the world every year, and have been since one is afraid to say when; where are they all at this present writing? The booksellers' shops furnish an account of some, the librarians of others, and some the trunkmakers and the buttermen know about, but the rest—where are they?

In these days, as in all the days which have preceded these days, all sorts of articles of wearing apparel become the mode, are worn for a short time by everybody, and are then by everybody cast off and rejected. What is the destiny of those rejected articles? When steel petticoats disappear, what becomes of them? When the ordinary hat worn by Englishmen is reduced to a height of from six to six and a half inches, what becomes of the hats, seven and eight inches high, of which the hatters' shops were full a few months ago? Where are the Wellington boots, of which the shoemakers' shops used to display long rows? Where are the steel châtélains which ladies used to carry at their girdles? Where are the Malacca canes of our youth? Even the footmen have discarded their use, we know; but what has become of them? They must be somewhere, in some form. Where? And in what form?

Numbers of people have entirely bewildered and stupefied themselves in endeavours to arrive at some rational conclusion on the subject of pins. The statistical accounts of the numbers of pins turned out annually at Birmingham and Sheffield alone, would lead one to expect that the earth itself would present the appearance of a vast pincushion. Where are those pins of which the yearly fabrication is on so vast a scale? Pins are not consumed as an article of diet. Pins do not evaporate. Pins must be somewhere. All the pins which have been made since civilisation set in, must be in existence in some shape or other; we ought to see nothing else, look in what direction we might, but pins. This island, not to meddle with other countries, ought to be knee deep in pins. Reader, how many pins are imported into your own house in the course of the year? Do you know what becomes of those pins? There are a few in your wife's pincushion, and one may occasionally be seen gleaming in the housemaid's waistband; but where are the rest? It is perfectly astounding how seldom one encounters a pin "on the loose." Now and then, by rare chance, as when a carpet is taken up, you may catch a glimpse of a pin lying in a crevice; but even this is an uncommon occurrence, and not to be

counted upon. You often want a pin, and take trouble to get a pin. Where are all the pins that ought to be always in attendance everywhere?

What can possibly become of all the steel pens, of which myriads are continually turned loose upon the world? Each individual pen does not last for a very long time. Left unwiped, as they generally are, steel pens soon begin to corrode and to get unfit for use. What do we do with them? We take them out of their holders, replace them with others, and leave the old pens lying about in the pen-trays of our desks, or where not. They are awkward things to get rid of, and mostly lie about uncared for. Still the pens, like the pins, do at last disappear. Whither? The earth is not prickly with steel pens. It ought to be; why isn't it?

What becomes of all the old gloves? (Our present inquiries leave us too breathless to make others as to the *new* gloves.) Old gloves are among the old things whose fate is hidden in the densest obscurity of all. Think of the numbers of old gloves that are cast off, and of the few old gloves that one sees about in the world. Where are they all? Where—if I may be allowed to introduce a personal matter—where are *my* old gloves? There are one or two pairs, dirty and open at the seams, lurking about in my drawers. There is, in my medicine cupboard, a bottle of sal-volatile, and one of essence of peppermint, respectively covered on the stoppers, the one with a grey, and the other with a yellow, kid glove, which, if they had voices, might cry, with the lepers of old, "Unclean! Unclean!" But what are these in proportion to the vast numbers of my old gloves? Where are the rest? Where, not to confine this inquiry too much, are the old gloves of my friends? Where are the old gloves of my enemies? Where are the old gloves of those who are neither my friends nor my enemies? Where are the old gloves of all mankind?

It is a difficult question to solve, this. A glove is a tough and uncompromising customer to deal with. We cannot conceive of him as dissolved into a pulp, and made paper of; nor can we imagine a thousand or so of him interdigitated and sewn together to make a patchwork quilt. Yet some function or other must be fulfilled by these old servants, and when their career at balls, at concerts, at opera celebrations, at garden parties, at horticultural shows, at weddings, at funerals, is brought to a close, there must be something still in store for them. For, if it were otherwise, and they were simply left to kick about the world unheeded, it could not be but that we should continually meet old gloves in society, or, retiring into the wilderness to meditate, should find them flying before the wind, like the sands of the desert.

The question what becomes of the old boots and shoes, is not quite so hard of solution. They are worn longer, and reduced to a much more abject condition of wreck pre-

vious to abandonment, than the old gloves. We see them, indeed, if we look about us, in use as long as fragments of leather will hold together, and, even after that grievous hour, when they will hold together no longer, when patching and sewing and nailing are alike ineffective, we still see shreds and patches of them lying about on dunghills and cinder-heaps, decaying until they become at last unrecognisable, and are old boots and shoes no longer.

What becomes of a great proportion of the produce with which nature supplies us so liberally? What, to take an entirely mad-denying instance, becomes of cabbages? The number of cabbages which the earth brings forth, in comparison to the number of which man is able to take cognisance in a cooked state, is disproportionate in the extreme. Go where you will (except in the paved streets of our towns), you find cabbages growing. In the country, in the suburbs, in the dingy back regions where the town melts into the suburbs, there are cabbages. The market gardens of Fulham, Chelsea, Battersea, Dulwich, Clapham, of the whole neighbourhood round about London, seem to contain nothing but cabbages. In amateur gardens, walled-in acres or half acres lying outside the pleasure-garden, I observe the fruits of the earth to be cabbages; the markets seem to be organised almost exclusively for the development of the cabbage trade; the stalls round Covent Garden are piled up with cabbages; the great carts which pursue an eastward course through Piccadilly, rolling along that thoroughfare all the night, are piled up to the height of the second-floor windows with cabbages.

But what becomes of the cabbages? How rarely does one see a cabbage either on one's own table, or on the tables of friends! Once or twice in the course of the spring, a cabbage may appear as an item in the bill of fare, but no oftener. It is said that cabbages are largely consumed in the poorer neighbourhoods; but to account for the number of cabbages produced, it would be necessary for the inhabitants of all kinds of neighbourhoods, rich and poor, not only to consume cabbages largely, but to live upon cabbages.

What a mass of matter must be furnished by the uneatable portions of the shell-fish which appear on our tables! What legions of oyster-shells must accumulate during the long period when there is an R in the month. The grottoes do not account for many; and, besides—what becomes of the grottoes? At all times of the year, both when there is an R in the month and when there is not, there is a steady consumption of lobsters and crabs; yet the roads are not crimson with their uneatable remains. They do not the "multitudinous" fields "incarnadine, making the green one red." May I ask what becomes of the shells of the peas, of the egg-shells, of the potato parings, of the asparagus—*of every head of which so little is eaten and so much is left?* Send away your plate, after

eating an artichoke. Not to ask what becomes of the plate (though I should like to know), I entreat you to consider the leaves.

Seriously speaking, and all exaggeration apart, it seems as if the bulk of matter which all this accumulation of objects suggests, must be something so enormous as sensibly to increase the mass of the earth. One would expect to find great hillocks of all sorts of heterogeneously formed material obstructing our road-ways, rising up to the first-floors of our houses, impeding our progress when we would move, obliging us to force our way through with steam rams. Yet it is not so. I do not suppose that there is any material difference in the elevation of the soil, caused by this accumulation of things, even in the now thickly populated neighbourhoods. Yet I would expect to find, added on to the earth's crust, a new modern stratum of the conglomerate sort, made up of pins, penny newspapers, old gloves, cabbage-stalks, orange-peel, old tooth-brushes, worn-out boots, steel pens, used lucifer-matches, and all the other produce which goes on for ever accumulating around and about us, and of the ultimate fate of which we know little or nothing. It is possible that such a stratum exists, but one hears nothing about it. It is not reported on by learned societies, nor recorded in scientific journals, nor, when cuttings are made through metropolitan soil, in order to the construction of district railroads, do we see streaks of soil made up of these objects, exhibited in section.

There certainly would appear to be some process in nature, causing things to disappear. At all events, they *do* disappear. I have seen a road mended in the country, and that in some district where there has been very little traffic, with such extraordinary and anomalous materials as broken bottles, brickbats, old saucepans, battered hats, hob-nailed shoes, and the like; and I have seen many of these objects lying for weeks and months without becoming incorporated with the main substance of which the road was made. And yet at last they have disappeared! For half a year at least, the old boot or the battered saucepan has been there, drifting from place to place, occupying now the centre of the lane, now the side, and by-and-by lurking in a secret place under the hedge; still there the thing has been, and I have seen no cause or just reason why it should not remain there in its integrity a hundred years. But I have left, for a time, the part of the country in which the saucepan-mended road was; and when I came back a year afterwards, that battered vessel was gone. It is so, again, with indoor rubbish, or with things not exactly coming under that denomination which you never use and never want. The things disappear. You do not consign them to the dust-hole, or put them in the fire; you merely cease to use them, or to take note of their existence; and in the course of time, longer or shorter, as the case

may be, they go. They dissolve, or evaporate, or in some other way cease to exist, and, to our great relief, we see them no more.

One of the last phases of all under which matter that has lost all distinctness and identity, appears, is that most mysterious substance which we call *flue*. What a strange institution is that, requiring for its development nothing but neglect! Passing a decorator's shop the other day, I noticed, on a coat of arms with which he had embellished his wire blind, the motto, "*Nil sine labore*"—"Nothing without labour." It struck me at the time as much too sweeping a statement; and now, pausing for a moment to reflect on *flue*, I find a means of confuting this reckless assertion. *Flue* is to be had without labour. Let things alone, and *flue* is the result. Let your bedstead alone, and see how the *flue* accumulates underneath it. Let your chest of drawers alone, and observe how the *flue* gathers behind that piece of furniture. Let your pockets alone, and note what a curious little pellet, composed of *flue*, forms in the corners of each of those receptacles. I have just extracted such a pellet from one of the pockets of an old waistcoat. I wonder of what it may be the remains—Julius Cæsar's toga—the stuffing of the great Alexander's saddle? Both existed once—and what became of *them*?

PRIZE BABIES.

RISING early one morning in July, bent on visiting Wimbledon and seeing the prize shooting, I was somewhat surprised to find myself, later in the day, sailing down the river to Woolwich to see the prize babies. Chance had caused this change in my plans, and had also given me, as a travelling companion, a poet who pledged himself to beguile the journey (if required) by reciting his own verses and abusing Tennyson's. At Westminster we embarked upon the good steamer *Heron*, Captain Wattles, and found the boat crowded with people, also bound for the Baby Show. After an interval that seemed long enough for a voyage to New York, the steamer approached the North Woolwich Gardens, at which the Baby Show was held. We saw the flags flying; we heard the drums beating; but, in accordance with a peculiarly English institution, we were not yet allowed to go on shore. There is a ferry between North Woolwich on one side of the river, and South Woolwich on the other side of the river, and it is necessary that this ferry shall be made to pay. Consequently, the steamer crept past North Woolwich, made fast to the pier at South Woolwich, and left us to be reconveyed across the river, at an additional charge, by the ferry-boat. Two tall and handsome soldiers, indignant at what they considered an imposition, refused to go on board the ferry-boat, and hired a skiff in which to row across. As no two tall and handsome soldiers were afterwards to be seen in Woolwich Gardens, it is to be presumed that these rebels paid with their lives the

penalty of their rashness in opposing the authorities. At least, this is the poet's theory, and he intends to work it out in a song which shall quite eclipse Kingsley's story of the three fishers who went sailing out into the west, out into the west when the sun went down.

The gardens at Woolwich are very prettily laid out. There is a miniature lake, backed by scenery; there are two orchestras and two dancing-floors; there is a fine esplanade along the river; there are all sorts of games, from Aunt Sally to rifle galleries; and there are trees and flowers in plenty. Altogether, an excellent place at which "to spend a happy day," and one would say as favourite a resort for the people of the east end of London, as Cremorne for the people of the west end.

Obviously, the thousands of spectators at the Baby Show came mostly from the lower part of the city. Servants out for a holiday, mechanics with their wives and children, young people who had come to join in the dancing after nightfall, composed the majority of the visitors. Everybody rushed off at once to see the babies, who were exhibited in a small hall and in a tent adjoining. The sight was by no means pleasant. A single baby is not only endurable, but is often absolutely attractive; but a miscellaneous collection of babies is the reverse of either. About one hundred and twenty children, of ages ranging from seven weeks to eighteen months, were on view. Railings had been erected up and down the hall, and, behind these, looking disagreeably like pigs in their pens, sat the mothers holding their infants. The weather was very warm, and the odour of boiled milk and pap mingled with the steaming perspiration of the crowd. Many of the children were asleep, and were laid out on the benches or on the nurses' knees, in attitudes horribly suggestive of their being dead. There was but one pretty baby in the show. This was a little girl, about a year and a half old, with bright black eyes, and enough hair to serve a dozen grown-up women in this age of chignons. This pretty little girl was greatly petted. All sorts of sweets were offered for her acceptance, and pennies and halfpennies were pushed into her hands. The other children suffered by comparison. Indeed, when the poet casually remarked that he had never thought that babies could be so ugly, the sentiment was cordially endorsed by several matrons, who had overheard it, and it was approvingly repeated throughout the hall as a very original and accurate bit of criticism.

But although there were no beautiful babies, there were numbers of fat babies, and large babies, and healthy babies. A gipsy woman carried in her arms a perfect little Hercules, as brown and rosy as herself, and with eyes almost as keen and quick as hers. Half-a-dozen stupid little monsters sprawled in a row, the flesh lying in rolls upon their arms and legs, and their cheeks bulging with fatness. As a contrast to these, there were the "Triplets," only seven weeks old—poor, puny creatures with

flat, idiotic faces. It is difficult to avoid being haunted by these Triplets. They were like the ghosts of babies. With their pinched features they seemed prematurely old, and yet they were so incomplete as to give one the idea that they were prematurely new. If this appear paradoxical, it is the fault of the Triplets. All the children present being competitors for prizes, I was astonished to see so many purely ordinary babies. The most of them were remarkable for nothing. They were neither very large, nor very small, nor very anything, except very clean. That, the proprietor of the show insisted upon, as a condition of admission. The mothers, too, were very neatly dressed. It was, however, apparent that they were mostly poor people who had brought their babies to the show solely for the sake of the money prizes. The proprietor had also bound himself to furnish the women with refreshments during the exhibition, and the prospect of unlimited porter and tea was doubtless a powerful inducement to exhibitors. I noticed that the majority of the women had come from the country. London was in a decided minority of mothers, as compared with Lancashire. They all seemed very contented, pleased with the attentions bestowed by the visitors upon their charges, but still more pleased when those attentions assumed the form of a pecuniary offering, however limited. They all agreed that Mr. Holland, the proprietor of the show, was "a real gentleman" and "had acted fair and honest in everything he said and done." The proprietor was equally well pleased with the conduct of the exhibitors, and liberally added silver cups to the money premiums he had promised.

The prizes were for triplets, twins, the finest boy, and the finest girl. They varied in value from fifteen to five pounds. Little difficulty was found by the judges in making their selections, and the awards appeared to satisfy all concerned. When the idea of a Baby Show was originated, several years ago, by American Barnum, it was thought in the first place, that nobody would be willing to exhibit a baby, and in the second place, that nobody would be willing to pay to see the babies if any were exhibited. Those fears turned out to be groundless, and there is really no other show so easy to get together and so popular. In the present case, the proprietor merely inserted his prospectus in a few country papers, and more than two thousand babies were offered for exhibition. The day on which the show opened, will long be memorable at Woolwich. Twenty-three hundred mothers, provided with more than that number of infants, appeared at the gardens, many having travelled hundreds of miles for the purpose. To convince most of these women that, for some reason or other, their children were ineligible, was an almost hopeless task. The women screamed; the children screamed; a baby *Babel* was improvised on the instant. The proprietor, frightened at the storm he had innocently provoked, was compelled to hide

himself from the furious mob of mothers. Several hours elapsed before the ground could be cleared of superfluous infants and the fortunate few arranged in rows for the inspection of the public. About thirty thousand spectators are reported to have attended the show during the four days on which it was kept open. These people paid a shilling each, and also benefited the proprietor by purchasing refreshments. As a pecuniary speculation, therefore, the Baby Show was successful, and will surely be repeated in other parts of the country. A portion of the press has protested against it very vigorously, on account of its indecency, and the danger of infecting children with each other's diseases. As to indecency, it is unquestionably true that for a Baby Show there must be babies; that babies in warm weather wear very little clothing; that nursing mothers of the class of these mothers are not particularly diffident in regard to the display of the upper part of their figures. But the spectators were nearly all of the same class as the exhibitors, and took the maternal displays as a matter of course. There were no indecencies. The conversation, though not refined, was certainly not gross. As to danger of infection, all the babies on exhibition were presumed to be in good health. Such a show is unquestionably an offence against good taste; but as it is prepared by persons who have no good taste, and is patronised by those who do not trouble themselves with aesthetic questions, this objection goes for nothing. I think that the poet put the matter very neatly when he said: "It is a very good show—for those who like it."

As a rule, I do not believe that people do like it. Crowds go out of curiosity, but, after seeing the show, do not look pleased. In point of fact, a Baby Show is very commonplace. After all, it is only one hundred children in one room. The preternaturally large babies, or the remarkably small babies, are in too great demand for booths and caravans at country fairs to waste their sweetness on a Baby Show for the sake of a doubtful prize. Many of the mothers who bring their children are women who would beg with the babies, or hire the babies out to other beggars, or tell fortunes with the babies in their arms, or do anything else with the babies to get money. Free food and drink for four days, and the chance of ten or fifteen pounds at the end of four days, to be earned by simply sitting on a stool and nursing a child, this is an opportunity very seldom offered to poor women, and no wonder that it is gladly accepted by those who have no delicate scruples about facing the public. It is easier than doing charwork. It is not more public than attending the customers at a costermonger's barrow, or picking up the sticks at Aunt Sally. It is more pleasant than many of the occupations in which these women are ordinarily engaged. The babies, also, are cleaner, better fed, and better nursed, than they would have been during the same time at home. There are four days' clear gain to the babies:

that is quite evident. The hall may be crowded and the atmosphere bad; but the crowd and the atmosphere in the garret at home are worse. Granted the danger of contagious disease, if you insist upon it; but there is most danger where there is most dirt; and the hall at Woolwich is a paradise compared with the homes of the babies. Thus, as the proprietor increases his profits, and the mothers pick up a little extra money, and the babies are more comfortable than usual, the only people who have anything of which to complain are the spectators, who really do not get the worth of their shillings. You are promised a show of babies, and you behold the babies; but still you are disappointed by the babies. You know that you have no cause of complaint against the proprietor, and yet you feel that you have been deluded, and you would like to call him a humbug. This is very irrational, but very natural. Most persons find it impossible to be interested in other people's babies.

Among the visitors to the show at Woolwich the women outnumbered the men, at least three to one. I asked several women why they had come to the show? Some said that they wanted to see "what it was like." Others were anxious to see how the prize babies compared with their own particular babies. Questions as to the result of this comparison, they invariably replied to by a smile, a simper, and a quick, triumphant toss of the head which spoke volumes of satisfaction. After the visitors relieved the exhibitors by taking care of the babies for a few moments, a few young men made themselves conspicuous by setting up as amateur nurses. Babies, passed from hand to hand, often made the circuit of the hall before they were returned to their mothers. The poet having gloomily suggested, in rather a loud voice, his fears lest the children should get mixed, a shout of dissent and reprobation broke out unanimously. Great excitement was caused by the appearance of a woman attended by a police detective. Her baby, whom she described as "a very fine, large, stout boy," had been stolen from her lodgings the night before; and the detective, in his wisdom, had suggested that it might have been taken by some speculator with a view to securing a valuable prize at Woolwich. This was too clever to be true. The woman examined all the babies, and declared that her own was not among them. This incident struck the poet very forcibly. He saw in it, the basis for a romance that would surpass the best efforts of the elder Dumas. You had only to suppose that, by some accident, there happened to be a baby on exhibition which, without being the child that was stolen, sufficiently resembled it to deceive the mother. Then the child would be claimed; the detective would insist upon taking it away with him; the real mother would be overwhelmed. "There! you can easily work it out for yourself," said the poet. Thanking him warmly (but insincerely) for this valuable contribution to literature, I proceeded to remark the absence of the fathers of the babies. All the women were

married, two or three, indeed, were widows, but the husbands and fathers who permitted the exhibition did not make their appearance. Some men came at night, to help carry the babies home; but I was informed that these declared themselves to be brothers or cousins of the exhibitors. We missed very little, however, by not being indulged with a sight of the fathers; for all the women who were questioned on the subject, asserted that the babies were the images of their fathers, and we could readily enlarge the pictures for ourselves if we felt inclined. In truth, I believe that the fathers acted prudently in staying away. There was a deal of rough chaff flying about during the day, and the chaffers would have made it very hot for any father who had offered himself to public inspection. To do the spectators justice, none of them approved of the exhibition except by their presence. None had a good word to say of it. Some called it "a lark," and some "a rum go," and "a queer start;" but if any one had proposed that the women and the babies should be sent home forthwith, I don't believe that one of the spectators would have objected, or would have demanded his money back.

Sitting over our whitebait in the neat little hotel attached to the gardens, the poet and I tried to think of some other exhibition that should be as absurd and as profitable as the Baby Show. Finally, we hit upon the exhibition of married couples, and communicated our discovery to the waiter, with all the pride of Columbus. Bless you! the proprietor had thought of that long ago, and was even then labouring over the idea in his mind, trying to give it some practicable shape. He rather thought he should hinge it upon something like the old fitch of bacon business, with a grand procession, a jury of old maids and bachelors, and all the ancient paraphernalia. This was a secret, however, and must not be let out just yet. A secret it should have remained, so far as I am concerned but for the fact that the manager of another garden, at the west end, has already anticipated the idea and advertised the married-couples show. But will any married couples consent to exhibit themselves for such a purpose? Without doubt, dozens. The manager will have an embarrassment of applicants. Do not suppose that the matter will end with the distribution of prizes for matrimonial felicity. The mania for this sort of show will have its day, and will go much further. There are thousands of persons ready to run wildly after every new thing, and to run all the more wildly if it be suggested that the new thing is rather improper. Let these people go but once out of curiosity, and, no matter whether they like the show or not, the manager is enriched. It is upon this principle that speculations of the character of the Woolwich Baby Show, are undertaken; and the shrewdness of this managerial judgment of human nature is shown by the fact that such speculations succeed where sensible enterprises fail.

The public is to blame for this, and must

accept the responsibility. Let us reform the public and it will be easy to do away with objectionable shows. At the Baby Show there was nothing to justify police interference; but nevertheless some writers called upon the police to break it up, with a childlike faith in the efficiency of the constituted authorities that would be admirable if it were not ridiculous. The Woolwich manager might have exhibited the babies in a state of nudity had he been so minded, and the show would have been successfully concluded before the authorities had decided whether they ought to interfere, whose business it was to interfere, and under what law interference would be strictly legal. Getting on by degrees, we may get a Show before very long, that will suggest to Somebody, M.P. for Somewhere, the vast idea of hinting the propriety of a revision of the licensing system in connexion with public entertainments. At about the same time, perhaps, the public will grow so refined, as to ask for this revision, or to demand it. Anyhow, both the poet and myself are hopeful enough to believe that the prize babies at Woolwich will never send *their* babies to a Baby Show.

A SUMMER SUNSET.

GREEN islands in a golden sea,
With amethyst cliffs that melt away
At every wash of the sleepy wave,
White towering Alps that greet the day;
And still through rents in the further space
Glimpses of distant ocean bed,
Burning with restless changeful light,
And veined with flushes of glory spread,
Far as the living are from the dead,
Far as the blessed are from hell's night.

Then the islands grow to radiant realms,
And shoot forth golden tongues of land,
And the Alps fade down to a level plain,
Where monsters troop in a threatening band;
Then murky towers, where ghosts can reign,
Rise like a wizard's dying dream;
While low in the west in a narrow vein
There spreads, through the dusk, one golden beam,
Like heaven's last and lingering gleam
Seen through hell's vista by those in pain.

Nature is changeful, and, like the sea,
Has its autumn ebb and its summer flow.
Cloudlets of morning pass with dawn;
Who can tell where the sunbeams go;
Dead flowers turn to mere earth at last,
Earth to blossoms breaks forth in May,
Life and death are ever at war
On this great chameleon world, I say;
Yet cloud or river, or leaf on the tree
Is not so changeful, it seems to me,
As a woman's mind—that a feather can sway.

AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

HE was a sturdy thick-set man in a holiday suit of new fustian, and with bewilderment written in every line of his honest face. The oracle of his party, and the guide-in-chief to three male and two female friends, as well as to their commingled families, he had evidently pledged *himself* to carry them through the Museum *successfully*, and was now in mortal dread

of losing his reputation. To see him dodging the statues in the Egyptian Gallery was a spectacle for gods and men. The numerous effigies of the cat-headed divinity, Pasht, and the two colossal heads of Amenophis, caused him deep anxiety; for the attention of the ladies was riveted on the first, and the children put an infinite variety of perplexing questions respecting the second. "Here's another one of that there Pasht," remarked one of the former, on reading the name on the pedestal. "What made her so fond of 'aving herself took, I wonder, for she ain't no beauty to look at?" "Is she Egyptian for Puss in Boots?" asked another. "Was Mennyoppis a good man, father?" chimed in a sharp lad of twelve, who had begged to carry the green guide-book in his own hand, and was puzzling himself over the names and descriptions it gives. The other three men looked profoundly miserable, and, as they paced the long chamber, preserved a moody silence, now and again looking askance at the first hapless mortal, addressed as Joe, but forbearing to add to his troubles by a single word. One of these was a corpulent, florid being, with a shiny face and a merry eye, whose frock-coat evidently impressed him with a sense of unusual responsibility; for he stuck out his chest like a black pouter pigeon, and until the one button fastened over it seemed bursting with indignation, and moved his arms round and round in windmill fashion with a slow regularity curious to see. There is a curve in the stuck-up elbow, which could only have been acquired in one way. Not by driving—that gives a more jerky and knowing upward twist; not by carrying heavy weights—that makes the hands big and the knuckles wrinkled and rugose, and our friend's fist is smooth and podgy; not by digging, nor hammering, nor by severe manual labour of any kind, for there is a certain daintiness about his movements which does not come from violent exercise, but which yet suggests shirt-sleeves and busy hands. An odd remembrance of a certain metropolitan shop-window flits before you, and you have your friend's calling at last. That oleaginous look about the hair and skin, that meaty plumpness, those full lips and rosy cheeks, mark the professional carver at a well-known ham-and-beef shop; and those large elbows have acquired their curve in supplying ounces from the brisket and slices from the round. A snow-white apron ordinarily covers that capacious paunch, and a linen jacket or a waistcoat and shirt do duty for

that most uncomfortable coat. Mentally ticking him off as Ham, you turn to the tall, thin, cadaverous man by his side, whose long legs strive in vain to keep step with his companion's waddle, and see, or think you see, that he is a journeyman tailor; and that the shorter man in the shabby shooting jacket, sells buttons and trimmings on commission. They have gone to make a day of it at the British Museum, at the suggestion of the worried guide in fustian, and, finding it an utter failure, are now thinking ruefully of a certain dry skittle-alley, where the mild porter is unexceptionable; of Gravesend steamers and shrimps; of vans to Hampton Court; of Greenwich Park; of the Eagle Tavern; of snug pipes in suburban arbours, with a glass of something comfortable after tea. For they are not happy among the relics of ancient Egypt; the scarabæus and amulets tell them nothing they can understand, and can, they say, be outmatched any day in the Lowther Arcade; the statues only seem stiffer and uglier than those adorning their favourite Sunday pleasure-garden; the mummies are curious, "if you really believe they've ever been alive," but they've rather a fusty smell, my dear, and one gets tired of looking at them, even, after a time; and as for the "specimens of unburnt bricks, and the stupid rows of little birds and queer marks on stone, which Joe says was their way of writing, why, they only prove what confounded fools the Egyptians must have been not to bake their clay and to write like other people. The stuffed monkeys were funnier than those bits of broken stone, and I vote we go up-stairs again, if we're to stay any longer in the musty old crib." Thus Ham, when the Lycian Gallery was reached. Joe had read out, slowly and lugubriously, from the catalogue, "No. 125, Eastern pediment, with various figures, probably divinities. No. 126, Half of the Western pediment; six warriors fighting." And the information fell upon them like a knell. There was no help for it. They were all tremendously bored, and made their way, penitent and mute, back to the Zoological collection.

It was the day after Mr. Walpole had moved the vote for the British Museum, in the House of Commons on 19th July last, that the foregoing experience occurred. An increase of some fourteen thousand pounds over the amount required last year was then asked for, and granted by our national purse-keepers; and it was to ascertain how far the pleas put forth for this extra expenditure would be justified by personal observation that our pilgrimage was made. Before dwell-

ing further upon the results of that pilgrimage, it will be well to epitomise the Museum statistics, taking Mr. Walpole's figures as our guide. The estimate for 1868-9 was ninety-nine thousand three hundred and eighty pounds, and that for the ensuing financial year one hundred and thirteen thousand two hundred and three pounds, the increase being caused, according to Mr. Walpole, by twelve thousand seven hundred and eighty-nine pounds being required for new buildings and repairs, and an extra sum of one thousand one hundred and forty pounds being needed for additional catalogues. The steady increase in the number of "persons admitted to see the general collections of the Museum," and for "purposes of study," was properly quoted as a matter for public congratulation, and the House of Commons cheered on learning that, whereas there were but three hundred and sixty-five thousand nine hundred visitors to the general collections in 1864, there were four hundred and sixty-one thousand in 1868, while those admitted to the reading-room in the same period rose from four hundred and seventy-seven thousand to five hundred and seventy-five thousand. Mr. Walpole urged, too, the "enormous utility of accurate and exhaustive catalogues," and explained that those relating to Hebrew literature were completed, and that the one of Spanish literature was in progress, and wound up his statement by saying that the accounts of the British Museum were now submitted periodically to the Audit Office, and were "specifically audited from month to month," so that the House of Commons had every check upon the disbursement of the money it was asked to vote.

There is not a word to be said against any of these statements. The wretched sheds, like worn-out photographic vans, or the superannuated bathing-machines of a race of giants, which have lumbered up the court-yard, and disfigured the entrance to the British Museum for years, conceal, as is well known, some of the choicest specimens of ancient sculpture, and other objects of antiquarian interest. These last have been stowed out of sight, like things to be ashamed of, ever since they came into the hands of the trustees; and the enlargement of the room containing the Elgin marbles, and the final excavation for, and recovery and display of, many noble masterpieces is matter for national congratulation. Students, too, having increased, have cause for thankfulness in the care taken to supply

their wants; and the grandest and best appointed public reading-room in the world will become an even greater boon than it is to men of letters, as the guide books and other facilities for consulting its treasures increase. It is pleasant to think of "the Museum Flea," and the many other abuses of the old reading-room, as utterly extirpated; and of most of the strikingly trenchant evidence given by Mr. Carlyle as obsolete. Idle loungers still take up the room which might be more profitably occupied by diligent workers; but it seldom happens that any of these last are unable to obtain a seat, and the imbecile who was sent every day to the reading-room by pious relatives, wishing to keep him out of harm's way, has, we would fain hope, no representatives in our day. Not that there are not plenty of eccentric people always to be seen in the reading-room. The untidy, the unkempt, the unwashed, the chattering, the vacuous of both sexes find their way there; and that the trustees had to remonstrate, not very long ago, upon the parasitically animated condition of a reader's coat, and out of deference to his fellow-readers, to exclude him till it was purified, seems to prove that the keeper of printed books does not err on the side of exclusiveness in the conditions under which he grants tickets for the library.

The man of education is thoroughly provided for at the British Museum. It addresses itself to his tastes and instincts throughout; and though the terrible crowding and confusion of the various collections jars upon his sense of fitness, he is generally able to find what he wants, and knows that a staff of accomplished, courteous, and specially qualified gentlemen will delight in guiding him. But to such visitors as Ham and his fellows the Museum is an appalling enigma; the solution of which is an impossibility. They understand not a tittle of what they see; there is nothing in any of the rooms they wander through so listlessly, to make the dry bones live; and upon this class the great national treasure-house is effecting a minimum of good. It is, of course, pleasant to learn from Mr. Walpole, that a hundred thousand more visitors entered the Museum during the last twelve months than was the case four years since, but the satisfaction is greatly modified when the nature of their inspection and the tenor of their remarks are known. In the opinion of *those best capable, from opportunities of observation, of judging, the British Museum*

is neither appreciated nor understood by the average visitor, and repeated visits of inspection have led us to the same conclusion. There is a manifest want of sympathy with the wants and wishes of the taxpayer who needs improvement most, and to whom the Museum should be a national elevator.

But let us accompany poor Joe and his friends up the principal staircase and to the chamber where our old friend the stuffed giraffe rears his graceful head; where the walrus exhibits his vast bulk; and full-grown gorillas from the Gaboon stare with fixed and rigid ugliness at all comers. There is more animation here and in the room adjoining than we found down-stairs. The attendant, who stands wand in hand, is not unfrequently appealed to for information, and a couple of seafaring men have a group of listeners round them, while they relate anecdotes of an extremely marvellous character concerning their own personal adventures with gorillas. These two sailors supply the element of human interest to the show, and it is instructive to mark the faces near them light up as after each story their owners turn again to the central case to examine the paws, arms, and mouths of the hideous creatures within it. When these sailors depart, not without our receiving a shrewd and humorously interrogative glance from one of them, as if to gauge the extent of our credulity, the sight-seers become dull. The antelopes are not popular. Crowded together like toy-animals shut up in a Noah's Ark, they present a confused medley of heads and horns, legs and tails, and glass eyes. Ham regards their quarters and haunches with an evidently professional eye, and has "heerd they is good eating though stringy;" Joe reads from the green guide-book troublously, that "antelopes are beasts with hollow horns, and chew the cud," a statement which provokes the sallow tailor into contradiction and querulousness. "They must put something in the book" he supposes, captiously; "though for his part he doesn't see why the 'orns must be hollow at all." Mildly reminded that the horn of the domestic cow is occasionally turned to use as a drinking vessel, and that there is nothing daringly unreasonable in the supposition that the horns of antelopes are similarly formed, he gives a discontented grunt and wanders into the next room alone. Here are some foreign excursionists who are profoundly gratified with the proboscis monkey; one of the

many sentimental couples always to be found in the Museum, its vasty solitudes making it a charming meeting-place to those wishing to be alone; some children who gaze awestruck at the baboons; and two women who pace slowly on, absorbed in talk, and look neither to the right nor left. The attendants answer all questions politely, but seldom volunteer information, and the general impression conveyed here, as down-stairs, is that both officials and visitors are weary, and that the first are longing for the hour of closing, and the second to accomplish the task of inspection they have set themselves. The overcrowding is painfully efficient in weakening interest and in confusing the mind. Go where you will you see incongruity and close packing; and through the Zoological collections and the long cases filled with birds, Joe and his friends wander open-mouthed and unhappy, though with a vague conviction that their enjoyment should be of the most rapturous kind. Even the portraits give them no pleasure, for they hang above the cases, and are too far from the line of sight for such merits as they have to be discerned.

But it is when the North Gallery, devoted to minerals and fossils, is reached, that the general dissatisfaction culminates. The guide-book is full of instructive information, but unfortunately it needs more education than our friends possess to understand it. Its style is rather close than popular, and "fossil plants with small whirls of leaves (*Asterophyllites*), from the coal-shale," or "*Stigmaria* in this case, and on the top of case four are the roots of the *Sigillaria*, which occur in the fire-clay beneath seams of coal," are extracts which convey nothing when read aloud by Joe to his friends. This is plainly felt, and so the book is shut up, and they march silently through the galleries. That the department of minerals with "Components of the *Arsenoid* and *Thionid* elements," and thousands of other specimens, as well as the botanical rooms with their excellent classification, should be shirked, was not surprising. The visitors who linger here are students; and Joe and his friends need more stimulating mental food during their rare holidays. It was vexing, though, to see them in the Assyrian room, and the Vase room, either of which would have been rendered replete with interest by the briefest oral explanation, for they evidently regarded one as a collection of stupid effigies and old stones, and the other as an

exhibition of crockery on a large scale. Yet not one of the party but would have enjoyed the bas-reliefs had they known that they actually represented the life of a people which flourished nearly three thousand years ago; if, in a word, what they saw could have been explained.

At St. Petersburg and Moscow popular explanatory lectures are given gratuitously at the national museums on certain days in the week, which the people flock to hear. Without advocating any such revolutionary change as this, may we not ask our legislators to consider whether the British Museum may not be made to perform its mission better; whether the illiterate taxpayer and sight-seer has not some claim to consideration; whether the noble galleries and the priceless curiosities stored in them should continue a sealed book to the vast majority of those visiting them? Some such query may have suggested itself to some of those who silently voted the one hundred and thirteen thousand two hundred and three pounds asked for by Mr. Walpole; but as it found no expression in Parliament, we venture to give it shape now.

"HAD" AND "WOULD."

CAN any learned lexicographer, grammarian, or philologist inform the world at what time the words "had" and "would" became synonymous in English speech, when joined with the words better, sooner, and rather? Ordinarily these words are by no means synonymous. "I *had* a dinner" and "I *would have* a dinner" are two sentences between which an hungry man, whether a grammarian or not, would speedily detect the difference. Hamlet, in his address to the players, says, "If you mouth it, as some of your players do, I'd as lief the town crier spoke my lines." Most of the editions of Shakespeare print, "I *had* as lief." Why not "*would* as lief?" It is a pity that Shakespeare did not correct his proof-sheets; for if such had been his practice, we should have known to which of the two words he lent his great example in this instance. The fact that "I *had*" and "I *would*" are both abbreviated colloquially into "I'd," explains how the convertibility of the two words in certain forms of expression became so common among talkers, though it by no means justifies the inaccuracy in writing. To use *had* where *would* is the proper word is a solecism which it would be better to avoid; or, as the offenders against the true grammatical construction would say, "*had* better be avoided."

No doubt there is great authority for the use of "had" where "would" would be more correct; but is any authority, however great, to be allowed, without protest, to degrade,

or help to degrade, our English tongue? The following examples, cited from some of the most noted English periodicals of the present day, will serve to show how unnecessary, as well as how inelegant and incorrect, is the use of "had" instead of "would," in phrases which imply preference for the doing of one thing instead of another, and in which an exercise of the will is always latent and presupposed.

Next to the great authority of Shakespeare comes that of Milton for the colloquial use of had instead of would, as in *Comus*:

But *had* we best retire? I see a storm.

This sentence means, "*would* it not be best that we should retire?" And there can be no denying that the word "had," if strictly admissible, conduces to brevity. But brevity is not to be purchased at the expense of elegance and accuracy, even by so great a master of the language as Milton.

The following are more recent examples of the unnecessary substitution of "had" for "would":

"I *had* as lief, she (Queen Caroline) added, be Elector of Hanover as King of England."—Lord Hervey's Letters, *Blackwood's Magazine*, February, 1868. This should be, "I *would* as lief."

"The man who touches them *had* better *have* put his head into a hornets' nest."—Hereward the Wake, by the Rev. Charles Kingsley. [It *would* have been better for the man who touches them to have put, &c.]

"Conway Dalrymple knowing that he *had* better not argue any question with a drunken man."—Last Chronicle of Basset, by Anthony Trollope. [Knowing it *would* be better not to argue, &c.]

"Had the author done so, even under such professional revision, there *had* doubtless been fewer misdemeanours against nature, good taste, and propriety."—Douglas Jerrold, *Weekly News*, October 15, 1854. [There *would* doubtless *have been*, &c.]

"The case was one which at all events in the interest of the defendant, *had* far better not *have been* brought into court."—Speech of Mr. Coleridge, Q.C., in the Court of Queen's Bench, February 1, 1868. [It *would have been* far better in the interests of the defendant if the case had not been brought into court.]

"Her fearless crew confess, that they *had* rather not make the voyage again."—Daily Telegraph, August 22, 1866: in an article on the arrival of the Red, White, and Blue, from New York. [The substitution of *would* for *had* is all that is necessary to convert this quotation into correct English.]

"The account of the suggestion, however, *had* better be given in Richardson's own words."—*Blackwood's Magazine*, March, 1869. [The account would be better if given in Richardson's own words.]

It must be said for the writers of the present day, that though great offenders in the use of these colloquialisms, they are but the copyists of

their predecessors in the eighteenth century. In No. 71 of the *Tatler*, Sir Richard Steele writes: "Mr. Bickerstaffe," said he, "had you been to-night at the play you *had* (would have) seen the force of action in perfection," and in No. 45, the same writer says, "Had the family of the Beadlestaffs known of your being lately at Oxon, we *had* in our own names and in the University's made you a compliment?" instead of, "we *would* in our own name *have* made you a compliment." Addison, whose reputation, as one of the correctest and most elegant of English writers, has not been impaired by the lapse of more than a century and a half, constantly makes use of "had" for "would have." Telling, in No. 407 of the *Spectator*, the story of a barrister who was accustomed to twist and untwist a piece of thread around his finger when pleading in Westminster Hall, he adds, "one of his clients, who was more merry than wise, stole the thread from him in the midst of his pleading; but he *had* better *have* let it alone, for he lost his cause by this jest."

So many examples, old and new, are sufficient to show that, rightly or wrongly, the substitution of "had" for "would" and "would have" has been accepted in English literature. Whether this short form is a gain to the language is a question that might be profitably discussed. Whatever may be the advantage in brevity in some of the instances cited, it can scarcely be alleged that either in brevity or in elegance "I *had* rather" is an improvement upon "I would rather," and that the actors would not do well, when they address the players in that memorable piece of good advice, to say, "I *would* as lief the town crier spoke my lines," instead of "I *had* as lief." This last unfortunate expression seems to be the fount and origin of what must be considered a perversion of the word had from its true meaning, and which has thence spread into literature, and produced other perversions, made after its own image. Great writers lead and the people preserve, though they do not create the language; and our great writers as well as the small should look to it, that they do not corrupt the very noble inheritance of language which they have derived from their ancestors.

AN EXPERIENCE.

IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

It was on a warm, early June afternoon that I was called into the consulting-room to see her.

It was out of the usual hours for seeing patients, and I remember that I resented the interruption, and the irregularity; for I was busy in the anatomical department of the hospital, deep in the study of an extraordinarily interesting specimen of—but, you won't care for these details.

However, when I read the note of introduction she had brought with her, I

was reconciled to the disturbance; the rather, because it seemed that just such a case as we had long been lying in wait for, now presented itself.

I was then young; an enthusiast in my profession, full of faith in science and in one whom I will call Dr. Fearnwell, under whom I had chiefly studied; without any consciousness of other kind of faith.

I was ambitious; up to this time, iron-nerved and hard-headed; possibly, I should add, hard-hearted. Yet I don't know that I was specially callous, careless, or cruel. It was more because such culture as I had had, was exclusively of the head, that I knew nothing about having a heart, than that I did not care to have one.

I believed myself to have, and I gloried in having, unusual power of brain. As many men I knew, boasted of the many hours they could run, row, or ride, I boasted of the many hours I could read hard and work hard. I had never spared myself, and, up to this time of which I write, had never had any warning that it might be wise to do so.

I dimly suspect, however, that this warning was on its way, that even without the shock of which I am going to tell, some crash would have come.

I remember that when I was interrupted to read the note which the porter brought me, the perspiration was streaming from my forehead. And yet the afternoon, though warm, was not sultry. And I had been employed in a way that called for extreme delicacy and accuracy of investigation and observation: not for physical force.

"Won't you wash your hands, sir, first? It's a woman and a child," was the suggestion of the good-hearted porter.

Though with some muttered expletives against the folly of such "fiddle-faddle," I took the man's hint, and, also, buttoned my coat over my shirt front, and pushed my wristbands up out of sight.

The venetian-blinds were down in the consulting-room, for the afternoon sun poured against its windows. Thus, until my eyes a little accustomed themselves to the dimness of the room I could not well distinguish its occupants.

After a few moments I saw the palest woman, of the most corpse-like pallor, I ever, before or since, beheld. She was seated near a table, with a female child of some two or three years old upon her knees.

She did not rise when I went in. Possibly—probably—she could not. A wo-

man with a face like that, could hardly stand up and hold so large a child. She wore a widow's cap, its border brought so close round her face as hardly to show an indication of hair. Her eyebrows were dark, at once decided and delicate; her eyelashes were peculiarly long and full, still darker than the brows, and almost startlingly conspicuous on the dead white of a fair-skinned face. Not even on her lips, was there, now, any tinge of other colour.

The child upon her knees was a little miracle of exquisite loveliness. But I noticed little of this then.

At the first moment of being in this woman's presence, I felt some slight embarrassment. I had expected to see "a common person." I felt that about this woman there was something, in all senses, uncommon.

My embarrassment was not lessened by the steady earnestness with which she fixed her deep dark eyes on mine, nor by the first words she spoke, slowly moving those white lips:

"You are very young; surely it is not to you, the letter I brought was addressed! You are very young."

The voice was the fit voice to come from such a corpse-like face. It was not her ordinary voice, any more than that was her ordinary (or could have been any living woman's ordinary) complexion.

I was still young enough to be annoyed at looking "very young." I was impatient of my own embarrassment under her searching study of my face. I answered, rather roughly:

"My time is valuable; let me know what I can do for you—unless, indeed, you think me 'too young' to do anything."

"It may be the better that you are so young," she said. There had been no relaxation in her study of me, and her voice now was a little more like a natural voice—like her natural voice, as I afterwards learned to know it only too well; soft and sweet; a slow and measured, but intense, music. "Being so young, you must remember something of your mother's love. It is not likely your mother loved you as I love this child of mine; still, no doubt, she loved you; and you remembering her love, may have some pity left in you for all mothers. This child of mine is all I have; my only hold on hope in this world, or in another. Life does not seem long enough to love her in; without her, one day's life would seem impossible."

Striving against the awe that *would* steal over me, looking into that solemn face, fixed by those deep still eyes, hearing that solemn voice, I said, with brusque impatience:

"I have told you my time is valuable. If you wish me to do anything, at once tell me what."

"Have you not read the letter I brought?"

"I have; but that explains nothing."

"My child is lame."

"That much I know."

"I am ready to answer any questions about what you do not know."

Then I questioned her as to the nature, extent, and what she thought probable cause, of her child's lameness. She answered always in few, fit words. I examined the child: she watching me with those deep, still eyes of hers. My heightened colour, my increasing animation, my eager looks, seemed to stir her a little.

My interest was thoroughly roused. This was exactly such a case as we desired to experiment upon; a case in which to try a new operation, on the success of which, under fair conditions, I was ready to stake all I cared for in life. She, with that monstrous egotism of maternity, mistook me so far as that she took my interest to be concentrated on this one sufferer.

"Can she be cured?" was asked so hungrily by the whole face that there was no need for the lips to form the words.

"Yes, yes, yes!" I answered, with joyous triumphant confidence. "She can be cured! She shall be! She shall walk as well as the best of us!"

Before I knew what was happening—not that there was any quickness of movement, but that I was utterly unprepared for any such demonstration—the woman was on her knees at my feet. With one hand she held the child; with the other she had taken my hand, on which she pressed her lips.

There was a speechless rapture over her face, and the most exquisite soft flush upon it, as she did this.

A queer feeling came over me, as I awkwardly withdrew my hand—my hand that for a long time afterwards tingled with consciousness of the touch of the woman's lips.

She rose, with no awkwardness, no haste; reseated herself, bent over, and kissed her child.

The child had been always watching us, its soft serious unchildlike eyes fixed

sometimes on me, and sometimes on its mother. I had never before, and have never since, seen anything like that child's eyes. They—but why voluntarily recal them, when the effort of my life for so long, was to keep them from always floating before me!

Suddenly the woman's face resumed its deadly pallor.

"Will it be very painful?" she asked.

"That is as you will."

"What do you mean?"

I explained. It was my advice that she should let her child be put to sleep with the then newly-discovered agent, chloroform.

"Is there danger in it?"

"None—if the stuff is carefully administered, as, I need not say, it shall be to your child. You can understand how difficult it is to keep a child still enough under pain, to give an operator a fair chance."

"It would be difficult with any other child, perhaps: with mine it is not difficult. She is so docile, so patient: she would keep still, and bear, uncomplainingly, anything I asked her to bear. She has already undergone great agony from a fruitless attempt at cure. But, of course, if, indeed, there is no danger, I would wish"—here she paused—"oh the weak folly of words! to save my darling pain."

"Do you judge your child to have a good constitution? The extreme debility you speak of, is preternatural."

She answered me eagerly, assuring me that her child, except for this lameness, which she considered to be not the result of constitutional disease but of an accident, had always had perfect health. She added:

"You are too young for me to tell my story to, or I might, by the circumstances of her birth, account to you for her extreme docility."

I then questioned her as to what had been done in attempt to cure the child, and I blamed her for not having at first come to us.

With perfect simplicity she gave me the incredible answer that she had never, till a few weeks since, heard of "us." Then, when she had replied to all my questions, seeming to win confidence in me, because of my confidence in cure, she spoke to me, with quiet intensity, of the child's peculiar preciousness to her.

To this I listened, or seemed to listen, patiently.

I was conscious that she was speaking to me; I was also conscious of her child's eyes watching me; but while she spoke and the child watched, I was arranging for the operation, the when, the how, all the details. There were difficulties in my way, obstacles to be surmounted. I was not at all sure of winning Dr. Fearnwell's consent that this child should be the first subject upon which the new operation should be tried. Dr. Fearnwell had said, I remembered, "We must first try this on some coarsely-born child, some child of robust peasant parents: some child, too, who, should its life be sacrificed, would be, poor little wretch! no loss, and no great loser."

I had more faith in Dr. Fearnwell always, than Dr. Fearnwell had in himself. I had, also, more faith in science than the more experienced man had. Besides this, Dr. Fearnwell was of extreme sensitiveness and tender-heartedness; his hand could be firmer than any, and his courage cooler, but he required first to be convinced of the unquestionable beneficence of the torture he inflicted.

Dr. Fearnwell's seeing this child beforehand would be a risk (when I looked at it with Dr. Fearnwell's eyes, I recognised its extreme fragility), but his hearing the mother speak of it, and of its extreme preciousness to her, would be fatal. He would warn, and question, and caution, till the woman's courage would fail; he would think it better that the widow should keep her lame child, than run the risk of losing it to cure its lameness. He was quite capable of telling her that this lameness would not kill, and that the attempt to cure it might; and then how could one expect a poor, weak, selfish woman to decide?

Once interested in the woman, Dr. Fearnwell would think nothing of the glory to science, and the gain to the human race, of successful operation, compared with the loss to this woman if she should lose her child.

This "weakness" (so I thought it) of Dr. Fearnwell's filled me with something as like contempt as it was possible for me to feel towards one who was my hero. Against it, I determined as far as possible to protect him. Though I had no consciousness that the child's eyes touched me, I knew how they would appeal to Dr. Fearnwell.

While the mother talked, therefore, I was scheming and contriving. I received the sounds of her words on my ear, and they conveyed corresponding ideas to my brain;

for afterwards I knew things she then, and only then, told me. But at the time I heard without hearing, in the same way that we often see without seeing, things that vividly reproduce themselves afterwards.

"When can it be done?"

That question brought her speaking and my thinking to a pause.

"Do you stay here long?"

"Not longer than is needful, for my child. I am poor. It is dear living in a strange place. But anything that is needful for my child is possible."

"If it can be done at all, it shall be done within the week."

"If it can be done at all!" You said it could be done; you said it should be done."

The way in which this was said, the look in the eyes with which it was said, revealed something of the stormy possibilities of this woman's nature.

"I spoke with indiscreet haste when I said it could and should be done. There are many difficulties."

I then explained the nature of those difficulties in the manner I thought most politic, and most calculated to induce her to connive with me in overcoming them. I dwelt much on the morbid over-sensitiveness which would paralyse the hand of the good doctor, were she to speak to him as she had spoken to me about the extreme preciousness of her child.

She studied my face with a new intensity; then she said:

"He need know nothing about me. I need not see him till all is arranged. The child can, for him, be anybody's child."

"Exactly what I would desire. I am glad to find you so sensible. Bring the child here to-morrow morning, at ten."

White to the lips again, she faltered:

"You don't mean that it will be done to-morrow?"

"No, no, no. No such luck as that," I answered, impatiently. "There are preliminaries to be gone through. The child will have to be examined by a council of surgeons. All that is nothing to you. Bring her to me, here, at ten to-morrow. That is all I ask of you. This is my name"—giving her a card—"You know from the superscription of the note you brought me, that my name is Bertram Dowlass. You may trust me to do the best I can for you."

She rose to take leave.

The quiet intensity of her gratitude, and her implicit, patient belief in me, did not

touch me. I let these things pass me by; there was no contact.

"I have no claim whatever on your gratitude," was my most true answer to what she said. "It is not the cure of your child that I care about, but the proof that human skill, aided by science, can cure thousands."

She smiled slightly, in gentle deprecation of my self-injustice—perhaps, too, in incredulity of my indifference towards her child.

That was the end of our first interview.

All the rest of that day I worked with divided attention, and with a strange unsettled feeling. This was a new experience, and it made me uneasy. Ordinarily I was my own master. I now put on the screw as I had never had to do before, and with little result beyond a painful sense of strain and effort.

It was natural that I should be under some excitement. I would not own to myself that my excitement was more than natural; nor would I, for an instant, listen to any internal suggestion that it had any other cause than that to which I chose to attribute it.

At the appointed time next morning, she brought the child.

There was no quailing yet, as I had feared there might be. She was still intent upon the cure, still full of confidence in me.

When she gave the small soft creature into my hold, and it put one of its little arms round my neck, voluntarily, confidently—I experienced a sensation I had never before known.

It turned out as I had expected. I had a hard battle to fight; my patience and temper were pretty well tried.

Dr. Fearnwell took the small being upon his knee, stroked its hair, looked into its eyes, felt its arms, and declared that this was not a safe case for operation; that the child was too delicate.

I and one or two others, equally bent on testing the new discovery, at last overruled his judgment, and carried our point—not till I was conscious of the perspiration standing in great beads on my forehead. I do not know that I exactly lied about the little thing, but I deliberately allowed Dr. Fearnwell to suppose that the child's position was such that it had far better die than live a cripple—possibly had better die than live at all; that it was a child whose existence in the world was an incon-

nience rather than anything else, and a constant memorial of what was best forgotten.

I was flushed with triumph when I returned to Mrs. Ross-car—so she called herself—bearing the child in my arms.

"With the sweat of my brow, I have earned the healing of your child," I said to her, as I wiped my forehead.

She was standing up close to the door; her arms eagerly received the burden of mine; her tongue made me no answer, but her face replied to me.

"On Monday at eleven," I told her. "This is Thursday. In the intervening days, keep your child as quiet as you can: give her as much fresh air and as much nourishing food as you can. Dr. Fearnwell sent you this"—slipping five sovereigns into her hand—"to help to pay your expenses. He will help you as much as you may find necessary. He is rich and kind. You need have no scruples."

The money was my own; it would have been more, but that I was short of funds just then. Her face had flushed.

"I take the money for my child's sake. I thank him for my child's sake," she said, proudly.

I was now waiting for her to go.

The door of the room was open; she stood facing the opening, and the light from the great stair-window fell full upon her.

For the first time I noted her great beauty.

She was still young, I daresay, but hers was not the beauty that depends upon the first freshness of youth. It was the beauty of perfectly harmonious proportion. Her form was at least as perfect as her countenance. She had the most statuesque grace I ever saw in living woman, as she stood there holding her child; holding it with no more effort than a Hebe shows in holding the cup of nectar.

Her deep, still eyes were fastened upon me. A curious shock went through me, even before she spoke.

Her face had now again that extreme pallor, such as I had never seen on any other living face.

"On Monday, at eleven," she repeated. Her marble-pale lips seemed stiffening to marble-rigidity. They seemed to form the words with difficulty. "You would not deceive me? There is not more danger than you tell me? Forgive me; but, now it is settled, my heart seems turning to ice. You would not deceive me? I know something of the callousness, the cruelty, of men; but this

would be too cruel. In all this world I have, as I have told you, nothing but this," hugging the child as she spoke, closer to that breast whose superb lines were not to be wholly hidden by the heavy muffling weeds she wore. "I have nothing but this to hope for, to work for, to live for. This is all I have saved from the past, all that is left to me in the future."

Her delicate dark brows gathered themselves threateningly over her intense eyes, as she added, in a soft deep voice:

"There would be one thing left for me to do if I lost my child. One thing, and only one. To curse the hand—whether it were the hand of God or of man—that took her from me."

I answered her coldly; as far as I could, carelessly. I steeled myself against the tragic truth of her words; but I was conscious of a creeping of my flesh.

"Madam," I said, "you are at liberty to change your mind. All arrangements that have been made, can be unmade. I would, however, advise you to avoid agitating the child."

This drew her eyes from mine to the small face on her breast. She had not raised her voice, had not indulged in any gesture; had not betrayed, except in the blanching of her face and the intense passion of her eyes, her agitation; the child was too young to understand her words. And yet, as we both looked at it now, its lips had parted, its face had flushed, its eyes and mouth and chin were quivering with emotion.

Perhaps the little creature was distressed by the vibrations of its mother's strongly-pulsating heart, against which it was held so closely.

She bent over it, held her face against its face, murmured soothing sounds. I was holding the door open. She now passed out without another word, and began to descend the stairs.

I stood looking after her: my eyes were caught by the glorious great knot of bright hair, which, all pulled back from her face, escaped from her bonnet behind. A slanting beam from the window had touched and fired it as she passed down the stairs.

Half-way down she stopped, turned, and looked back and up at me. When the mother looked, her child looked too. They remained so, for perhaps half a minute.

How often afterwards, in dreams of the night, in waking visions of the dark, and worse, far worse, in the broad daylight and peopling the sunshine, looking up from the

grass, or from the water, looking forth from the trees, or the flowers, hovering between her and other faces, did I meet those haunting eyes: the two pairs of eyes, so like in their difference, gazing at me with varying expressions of appeal, reproach, agony, or—worst of all—resignation!

"Good-evening, Mrs. Rosscar."

I turned back into the room, but could not hinder myself, a few moments after, from looking out to see if she were still there. She was gone.

During the Friday and Saturday intervening between that day and the Monday, I hardly thought of the mother and child. I thought constantly, and with feverish eagerness, of the operation, and of the triumph of its success; but I did not realise the quivering agony of body and spirit—the child's body (even if all sensation were deadened for the moments of operation, there must be keen suffering afterwards), the mother's spirit—implied even in success. As to failure, I did not admit its possibility.

On the Sunday I was restless. I felt it needful to do something. I could not apply to book-study, and from the more practical part of study the day shut me off. I got on board one of the river steamers, not designing anything but to get out in the country, and have a good walk. But the first person my eye fell on, when I looked round the crowded deck, was Mrs. Rosscar; her child, of course, in her arms.

For a moment I felt afraid lest this might mean that my patient was escaping me.

"Where are you going?" I asked her, abruptly.

"I do not know," she answered, with her quiet voice and rare smile. "You recommended me to give the child all the air I could. I thought of landing at one of the pleasant green places, and sitting about in the fields for a few hours, and then taking the evening boat back again. I thought, at some farmhouse or small inn, I could get some food for her—at all events, milk and eggs and bread-and-butter."

I was standing on the deck, in front of her. I said, what suddenly occurred to me:

"You are much too beautiful and too young, to go about alone in this way, among such people."

"I dare say I am beautiful, and I know I am not old; but my beauty is not of the sort to draw on me the impertinence of common people. I am not young in my soul. I know how to protect myself."

"If you don't mind my company, I'll manage for you. You are not strong enough to slave about with that weight always in your arms. You can do it, I know; but you should not overtax your strength to-day; your nerves should be in good order to-morrow."

She blanched, suddenly, to that absolute pallor again.

"Will they let me be in the room? Will they let her lie in my lap?" she asked.

I shook my head.

"In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred this would not answer, though it might in yours; it is difficult to make exceptions."

She gave a patient sigh; sat some time with her eyes fixed on the gliding shore; then said, looking at me again:

"Will it take long?"

"Oh, no, no; a very short time; a few moments."

"And she will feel no pain?"

"None."

She said, as if to herself, her eyes subsiding from my face to settle on the shore again:

"After all, God is sometimes merciful. I almost feel as if I could love Him. When these little feet"—touching them with a tender hand—"walk, I will try with all my soul to love Him."

I don't know what possessed me this day. I laid aside all my habitual shyness. I hardly thought of exposing myself to the ridicule of my colleagues, should I encounter any of them. But thinking of this chance, I glanced at Mrs. Rossicar's dress; trying to discover how she would strike a stranger, and to what rank she would be supposed to belong.

Of the dress I could make nothing; it was all deep and long-worn mourning. As far as I could tell, nothing of her station could be learned from her dress.

She was standing. She had moved to the side of the vessel, a little way apart from me. She was pointing out something to the child. From the poise of her head, down all the lines of her form, to the firmly-planted beautiful foot, from which, by times, the wind swept back the drapery, there was something regal about her. The child was daintily dressed in white; it looked all soft swansdown and delicate embroideries. It might, I thought, have been a queen's child.

I went to her side, and proposed that we should land at the first stopping place, and take a row-boat. She agreed. She would have agreed to anything I proposed; she

had a feeling that the child's life was in my hand. So, we were soon gliding along the shady bank of the river—she and I and the child—sometimes, among the water-lilies and close to the swans; sometimes, almost touched by drooping boughs; sometimes, for a moment held entangled by the sedges. All very silent.

Mrs. Rossicar was one of those women who have a talent for silence, and, more than that, who seem hardly to need speech. To-day she was content to watch the child. The child sat on her knees, with musing eyes and tranquil face, watching the gliding water.

Now and then, the child smiled up into the mother's face; now and then, the mother bent over and kissed the child; there seemed no need, between them, for any other kind of speech. That child's smile was of the most wonderful and sweetness. It was the loveliest and tenderest expression. I did not then, you must understand, consciously note all the things I speak of as I go along; they returned upon me afterwards. I had time enough, in time to come, to remember the past. Time enough, Heaven knows!

Early in the afternoon, we stopped at a comparatively unfrequented place, and dined.

Mrs. Rossicar's quiet undemonstrative, and yet pleased and grateful, acceptance of all my services, her acquiescence in all I proposed, did not seem to me strange. The day was altogether a dream-day. I was in the sort of mood in which to find myself the hero of a fairy-tale's adventures would hardly have surprised me: a most unwonted mood for me.

I have thought about it since, and wondered if she acted as she did, from inexperience, or from indifference. Was she ignorant, or was she careless, as to what might be concluded about her? I believe the fact was, that she thought neither of herself, nor of me, but merely of "a good day" for the child.

She laid aside her bonnet, and her cap with it, before she sat down to table: showing that wealth of brown hair, and, what much more interested me, that head fit to be the head of a goddess. "And yet," I thought, "she seems a very ordinary woman; she seems, even more foolishly than most women, absorbed and satisfied by the possession of a child."

In laying aside her bonnet and cap, she had laid aside, also, her shapeless cloak; her close-fitting black dress displayed the

lines of shoulders, bust, and waist, fit to be those of that same goddess.

She was a splendid woman. The well-formed white soft hands made me conclude that she was also, by conventional rank, a lady.

We returned as we had come; only that the sunset mirrored in the river, the swans, the sedges, the rippling run of the water, the capricious warm breathings of the soft wind seemed, yet more than the morning brightness, things of a dream. We reached the widow's lodging at about the child's bedtime.

She did not ask me to go in, but I went in.

She told the child to thank me for "a happy, happy time;" which the little thing did with a prettiness pathetic to think of afterwards, adding, of her own accord:

"And for showing me the lilies and the pretty swans."

The mother hung on her words with rapture, and then, raising her face to mine, said:

"If you make my child able to walk in the warm sunny grass, on her own little feet, I will learn to believe in a loving God, that I may call His choicest blessings down upon you. I will entreat Him to prosper you in all your doings, to gladden your whole life, to let the love of women and of little children sweeten all your days."

I pressed, in parting, the hand she held out to me. After I had left her, her last words went echoing through my brain.

When I got home I tried to apply myself to hard study—quite vainly. But I do not think that she, alone, was responsible for this. I believe that, just at the time when I first met her, my brain was on the point of giving-in, and of resenting the strain of some years.

This phase, at all events, of my collapse, had a strange deliciousness about it. Soft thoughts and sweet fancies thronged upon me. I gave myself up to them, weary of the effort of self-mastery.

Again and again, as I fell asleep, I was gliding softly down a sunny river. I seemed to hear the dip and splash of oars, to feel the movement of the boat under the impulse given by them, and then the words, "May the love of women and of little children sweeten all your days!" sounded in my ears with such distinctness, and seemed to come from a voice so near, that I awoke with a start, and a feeling that I should see the speaker standing beside my bed, and that I had felt her breath upon my brow.

Then, like a fool as I was, I lay thinking of the woman who had spoken those words. "What a rich low voice she has; what sweet deep eyes she has; what a shapely foot she has; what a splendid form it is; what a soft white steady hand she has!"

"Yes," I then said to myself, trying to deceive myself. "She would make a first-rate hospital nurse; strong, calm, gentle, wise."

Next day, a day of intense excitement to me, the operation was performed. It was successfully performed. Everything that happened at about this time, after that Sunday on the river, seems wrapped in a dream-haze.

But I have a distinct recollection that Dr. Fearnwell said to me, "Dowlass, you are over-doing it; I don't like the look of your eyes; take a holiday." But whether this was before the operation, or after it, I don't know. I know that I made him some jesting answer, and laughed at his grave concern.

I know that late in that day, when I first saw Mrs. Rosscar after the operation, her expression of her passionate joy and gratitude made me half delirious with an uncomprehended feeling—and that part of it was fear.

The child, after the operation, was placed in one of the wards of the hospital. The mother left it neither night nor day. I had prevailed in getting this exception to rule allowed; and for this her gratitude was almost as great as for our other success.

Through the day after the operation, and the day following that, I often stole a few moments to go and look at the little patient sufferer, and at the joy-illuminated radiant face of the mother. The more radiant the mother's face was, and the more entirely all seemed well, the more I felt afraid.

When, on the third day, the child sank—died in its sleep—I knew it was of that, I had been afraid.

I cannot even now account for the child's death. It should have lived and grown strong; there was no inflammation; the success of the operation was perfect.

Perhaps it was a child born not to live. Perhaps the constant presence of its mother made it keep up too strong a strain of self-control, for its strength. It must have suffered, but it did not moan, or cry, or give any sign of suffering, except what was to be read on the often-damp brow and in the over-dilated eyes. "Eyes!" Yes. It is always "eyes." Eyes are always haunt-

ing me. Often the child's eyes, as they looked up at me, when I bent over it. I have fancied since that it would have spoken to me then, complained of pain, but for the mother being always close and within hearing. I have fancied since, that it looked at me, with that intent look, hoping that I should understand.

A poor sickly tree—I think a sycamore—grew outside one of the windows of the ward in which the child lay. It was swaying and swinging in the evening wind and evening sunlight, and its shadow was waving to and fro on the child's bed when I went into the ward on the afternoon of that third day.

The child liked to watch the shadow and had begged not to have the blind pulled down.

"Had I best wake her?" Mrs. Rosscar asked me, the moment I approached the bed. She was looking strained to-day, and anxious. "It is rather long since she took nourishment. And last time she was awake, I thought she seemed more weak and faint than she has seemed since Monday."

"When was she last awake?"

Mrs. Rosscar looked at her watch.

"Half an hour and three minutes ago; but she took nothing then, for she smiled at me, and then dozed off, just as I was going to give her her arrowroot and wine. It is an hour and a half since she had anything."

"By all means wake her," I said. It struck me that her little face looked pinched and cold. "The sleep of exhaustion will do her no good," I added.

Mrs. Rosscar bent her face over the child's face. I stood by, with my heart striking sledge-hammer blows against me.

"Mamma wants her darling to wake up and take some wine," she said, with her cheek lying against the child's cheek.

No movement or murmur of reply.

Lifting her head, and looking into my face, she said, in what then seemed to me an awful voice:

"She is very cold!"

I pushed the mother aside, I bent over the child, I felt for its pulse, watched for its breath. In vain.

I ordered flannels to be heated, and the little body to be wrapped in them and rubbed with them. I tried every means I knew of, for restoring animation.

In vain.

While the mother was preparing food for it, the child, having smiled at her, had fallen into a doze. That doze was the doze of death.

When we desisted from our efforts to wake it, and left the poor tortured little body in peace, Mrs. Rosscar, who had been kneeling by the bed, rose. She stood motionless and speechless for moments that seemed to me no portion of time, but an experience of eternity.

I resolved that I *would not* meet her eyes; but she was the stronger willed, and our eyes did meet. I shrank; I shivered; I looked, I know, abject, craven, self-convicted. I felt I was the murderer she thought me.

Slowly, with her eyes on mine which watched her with a horrible fascination, she lifted her grand arms, and clasped her hands above her head.

The uplifted arms, the awful eyes, the indefinite horror of that pause before speech were enough for me.

As her lips opened, to give utterance to the first words of her curse, I, lifting my own arms, as if to ward off from my head an imminent blow (they told me afterwards of these things), and struggling for power to articulate some deprecation—I, meeting her eyes with unspeakable horror in my own, staggered a moment, then fell, as if she had struck me down.

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VERONICA.

THE AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE."
IN FIVE BOOKS.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER VII. MR. PLEW.

At Shipley-in-the-Wold, people dined at o'clock and took tea at six or seven. A-time" was the vicar's favourite hour at twenty-four, especially in the winter m. The work of the day was over. The blazed up companionably, and filled the es of conversation with light and nth. And if a forlorn wind went moan-without upon the "glooming flats," its e only heightened, by imagined contrast, comforts of the ingle nook.

he family sitting-room—named in Dane- parlance, the parlour—was no excep- to the assertion that Shipley vicarage an ugly house. Yet even here the ic of the leaping flame and glowing s worked wonders. It sent flickering lows to play over the bare ceiling; ade the glass panes of a tall book-case kle with flashing rubies; it found out y gleam of gilding on the tarnished ings of the well-worn books; it mel- d the hue of the faded crimson window- ains, subdued the staring pattern of wall-paper, and made the old-fashioned tz covering on the furniture seem rich harmonious as an Indian carpet.

"Give me another cup of tea, Veronica," the vicar, sitting in the parlour on a r March evening.

is daughter and his ward were both him. On each of the three faces there for once, a look of cheerfulness. That ring their guest had been pronounced of danger. The shadow which had ened the house was passing away.

"Give me another cup of tea," said the vicar once more, rubbing his hands together. And then he pursued the discourse which his demand had interrupted. "Yes; and I assure you I am very much pleased with Sir John altogether. Nothing could be better chosen than his manner of expressing himself."

"What did he say, papa?"

"Oh, well! I cannot recollect word for word. Thanks, of course, and gratitude, and—and so on. But not over-done. Very earnest and gentlemanlike. He appears to be a man of the world, yet not exactly worldly. He has, in short, I should say, a great deal of savoir vivre."

"Savoir vivre!" repeated Maud, musingly. "That would be an art to learn; how to live!"

"The quintessence of all arts, Maudie."

"Yes; and it would include—would it not?—how to die; if one did but consider aright."

"Maud!" cried Veronica, with a little shudder, "I do beg of you not to be solemn. Don't talk of such things. It makes me cold. You are worse than a north-east wind blowing over the snow-drifts."

Veronica inherited from her mother a more than childish horror of death. The slightest allusion to it sufficed to cloud her bright face and make her irritable.

"Well," answered Maud, quietly. "Sir John Gale is not going to die just yet, they say, so there is no need to be solemn, as you call it. It is to be hoped he will give up hunting, or learn to get a better seat on horseback. Joe Dowsett says that that hunter of his is as gentle as a lamb, and has such a mouth that a baby might ride him. And yet Sir John could not contrive to stick on his back."

"That's not quite fair, Maud," observed

the vicar. "When Sir John was thrown opposite the garden gate, he was in a half-fainting condition, you must remember. But it was not then that the mischief was done. It was an ugly fall he got earlier in the day from a fresh, hot-tempered beast. He changed horses afterwards, and persisted in continuing to 'assault the chase,' as Mugworthy says. So I do not think we are justified in concluding anything to the disadvantage of his horsemanship."

"But don't you know, papa," Veronica put in, "that Joe has inoculated Maud with the true Daneshire notion that only Daneshire folks born and bred, can ride?"

Maud smiled and shook her head.

"Sir John charged me," said the vicar, with 'a thousand heartfelt thanks to my amiable daughters.'"

"Thanks?" exclaimed Veronica. "Truly we have done nothing for him. Paul takes care that his master shall lack no service. So then, Sir John thinks that Maud is your daughter as well as I?"

"I suppose so. It matters nothing. In a short time he will go away, and in a—perhaps—rather longer time, will have forgotten all about us; so that it was very unnecessary to trouble him with family details."

"If he forgets all about you, it will be very ungrateful, Uncle Charles," said Maud.

From the earliest days of her coming to the vicarage, Maud Desmond had been used to call Mr. Levincourt and his wife "uncle" and "aunt," although she was, of course, aware that no relationship really existed between them and herself.

"Ungrateful? Well I don't know. It would scarcely have been practicable to leave him outside the garden gate all night. Do you know any one who would have shut the door and gone in quietly to bed under the circumstances?"

"Forget us!" cried Veronica, with an impatient shrug of her shoulders; "no doubt he will forget us! Who that once turned his back on Shipley would care ever to think of it again?"

"I would," replied Maud, very quietly.

"Would you? I am not sure of that. But at all events the cases are widely different. Sir John is wealthy. He can travel. He has seen many countries, Paul says: France, Italy, the East. He can go where he pleases: can enjoy society. O, Shipley-in-the-Wold must be a mere little ugly blot on his map of the world!"

The vicar sighed, uncrossed his legs, and

stretched them out straight before him, so as to bring his feet nearer to the fire.

"What made him come to the little ugly blot, then, when he had all the sunny places to choose from?" demanded Maud, indignantly.

"He came for the hunting, I suppose."

"Very well, then; you see there was something in Shipley that he couldn't get in his France, and his Italy, and his East!"

Veronica burst out laughing. She seated herself on the rug at Maud's feet, and leaning back looked up into her face. "What a child you are, Maudie!" she exclaimed. "His France and his East! Yes: I suppose rich people find good things everywhere—even in Shipley."

"And they get pitched off their horses, and are bruised and cut, and burnt by fever, and prostrated by weakness, in spite of their riches," observed Maud, philosophically.

"Children," said the vicar, suddenly, "do you want to go to Lowwater on the nineteenth?"

"Of course we do, papa. What is it? Have you had an invitation?"

Veronica's eyes sparkled, and her rosy lips smiled, and she clapped her slender hands together joyously. Maud, too, looked eager and interested.

"Yes," answered Mr. Levincourt; "I have had an invitation for us all to dine with the Sheardowns on the nineteenth. It is their wedding-day."

"How exquisite!" cried Veronica, seizing one of Maud's hands that rested on her shoulder, and squeezing it hard. "A dinner party! A well in the desert! A tuft of palm-trees in a barren land!"

"I suppose we must go," said the vicar, plaintively.

"I 'suppose we must,' indeed. Why, papa, you know you like the idea of it as much as we do."

"I am always charmed to meet Mrs. Sheardown and the captain."

"No doubt of it," cried Veronica, now in a full glow of excitement. "We know that you are Mistress Nelly Sheardown's most devoted cavalier. But it isn't only that, papa mio. You like the idea of a change, a break in the monotony, a peep at something beyond Shipley. You would like to go, if it were even to dine at Haymoor with old Lady Alicia. And quite right too, say I."

The vicar made an attempt to assert his prerogative of victimhood, but in vain.

The varying thermometer of Veronica's

spirits had risen to fever heat, and she rattled on volubly, speculating as to who there would be at Lowwater; whether Mrs. Sheardown would contrive to give them a dance in the evening; what she should wear (exhaustless theme), and so forth.

At length the stream of words slackened, and then ceased. The rival merits of scarlet and amber ribbons demanded an absorbed and silent consideration.

"Don't you think, Uncle Charles," said Maud, "that Mrs. Sheardown is the sweetest woman you ever saw?"

"She is charming, in truth; charming and excellent; and, moreover, possesses a mind of a very superior calibre."

"Bravo, Uncle Charles! And then she is—in my eyes, at least—so pretty. That quality must not be omitted in the catalogue of her perfections."

"I am not quite sure on the point, Maudie. Is she very pretty? I don't think that any man would ever have fallen in love with Mrs. Sheardown for her beauty."

"Perhaps not. And if so, all the better. Sure I am that any who once loved her would never cease to think her beautiful."

Veronica looked up. "All true," she said. "I agree with your eulogium. And observe that it is pure magnanimity which prompts me to do so. For, sweet Mistress Nelly does not like me one bit."

"O Veronica!"

"O Maud! It is so. I have a sixth sense, which never deceives me in these matters. I know that to Mrs. Sheardown I am not simpatica."

"Simpatica! Nonsense. Whenever you use an Italian word where an English one would serve, I know that you are saying something that won't bear daylight. Why should not Mrs. Sheardown like you?"

Veronica clasped her hands behind her head, and rested both head and arms on Maud's knee. Then, with her eyes cast contemplatively upward, "Because I am not good," said she.

The vicar's brows contracted into an uneasy pucker as he looked down on his daughter's beautiful face.

"Veronica," he said, almost sternly, "I wish you would not say such things."

"Very well, papa; I won't."

"Still more, I wish that you would not think such thoughts."

"Ah, questo poi——"

"If you please, sir," said Catherine, the maid, putting her rosy face into the room, "here is Mr. Plew."

Mr. Plew was hospitably invited to enter. The surgeon of Shipley was a small man, with a fringe of straight light hair round a bald crown. His eyes were of a weak blue tint, his skin usually pale yellow. On the present occasion, however, it burnt with a fiery red, in consequence of the change from the piercing outer air to the temperature of the vicar's well-warmed and well-lighted parlour. His eyes watered, and his frost-inflamed nose glowed like a hot coal, above the white woollen comforter that enveloped his throat.

"I fear I am intruding at an unseasonable hour," said Mr. Plew, speaking with a strong provincial accent and a gentle, deprecating manner.

"By no means. Pray come in. It is our idle hour, you know. Veronica, ring for a clean cup, and give Mr. Plew some tea," said the vicar.

"Not any, thank you. Pray don't move, Miss Levincourt. I have just left our patient's room. I could not resist coming to congratulate you on the favourable verdict that Dr. Gunnery pronounced this morning. Paul told me. I was unable to be here earlier in the day. But from my own observation of Sir John's condition this evening, I am quite able to endorse what Dr. Gunnery said. Danger is over for the present."

Mr. Plew spoke in a rather hesitating, shy way. And, although he seemingly tried to control his wandering glances, he could not help turning his eyes at every minute towards the hearth, where Miss Levincourt still remained in her nonchalant attitude on the rug.

"Veronica, get up," whispered Maud.

"Why? I am very comfortable. Mr. Plew is an old friend. We don't treat him with ceremony; do we, Mr. Plew?" said Veronica aloud.

"O dear, Miss Levincourt, I trust not. I beg—that is—I hope you would not think of disturbing yourself on my account."

"Then you must seek another cushion," said Maud, bluntly. "I am weary of your weight. You are as well able to support yourself, as I am to support you."

With that, Miss Desmond rose, crossed the room, and took a chair beside the vicar. Mr. Plew's face uttered a mute and disapproving commentary on the action.

Veronica caught his look, and instantly answered it by speech.

"Is Miss Desmond bound to give way to my whims, pray? I have more selfishness in my little finger than she has in her

whole composition. She is worth three times my weight, in pure gold. Ain't you, Maudie?"

"I should say," answered Maud, stiffly, "that a discussion of our comparative merits would be highly uninteresting to Mr. Plew."

Mr. Plew looked amazingly uncomfortable. The vicar came to his rescue.

"We are much obliged to your unremitting attention, Mr. Plew. And to it is owing, under Providence, the happy issue of this affair. I can venture to say that Sir John is very sensible of his debt to you. I have seen and spoken with him to-day for the first time."

"O, indeed, sir?"

"Yes; a very agreeable man, Sir John."

"I dare say he is, Mr. Levincourt. But you know the circumstances under which I have seen him have not been favourable exactly." Here Mr. Plew tittered faintly.

"H'm! Not a good patient, eh?"

"I won't say that, sir. But I should say he had not been accustomed to be restrained in any way. His servant manages him, though."

"Paul is a capital fellow; one of those excellent servants that one never finds in England."

"Indeed, sir?"

"No, our soil won't grow them. Or, if one is to be found here and there, they are, at any rate, not indigenous to Daneshire."

"Daneshire people, high or low, are not remarkable for civility," observed Veronica.

"Nor servility," added Maud.

"I suppose we shall soon be losing our guest," resumed the vicar. "He spoke to-day of relieving us of his presence, et cetera. The fact is, that to us personally his stay involves scarcely any inconvenience. But he will naturally be anxious to be gone as soon as may be. How soon do you think he will be able to travel?"

Mr. Plew could not tell. He would be able to judge better on that point when the sick man should have left his couch. He anticipated that Sir John would find himself very weak. There had been much prostration.

"I hear," proceeded Mr. Plew, "that Sir John Gale's groom and three hunters have been sent away from the Crown. I was at Shipley Magna to-day, and was told that the servant and horses had left for Danecester on Wednesday. They are bound for a place, that Sir John owns, in the south, somewhere. I forget the name

of it. He is immensely rich, from what I can gather."

As thus Mr. Plew gossipped on, in a monotonous tone, the vicar listened, or seemed to listen, with half-closed eyes. His thoughts were in reality harking back to Veronica's phrase that Shipley must be "a mere little ugly blot" in Sir John's map of the world. And then the vicar indulged in some "sweet self-pity;" contrasting his days spent among Daneshire hinds, and under Daneshire skies, with the brightness of his three years' sojourn abroad. And yet those years spent in foreign lands had been haunted by the ghost of a lost love, and by a vain regret.

Presently Mr. Plew's talk turned on the choir of St. Gildas, the progress it had made, and the desirability of introducing still further improvements. Then Mr. Levincourt roused himself to attend to what was being said. He began to talk himself, and he talked very well. Veronica and Maud sat a little apart, away from the glare of the fire, and held a whispered consultation as to their toilets on the nineteenth.

Maud had her share of natural girlish interest in the topic; but she tired of it long before her companion. With a quiet movement she drew a book from beneath a heap of coloured wools and canvas in her work-basket, and began to read, almost stealthily, half hidden behind the vicar's arm-chair.

Veronica advanced to the hearth, drew her chair up opposite to Mr. Plew, and disposed one foot, coquettishly peeping from under the folds of her dress, on the polished steel bar of the fender.

Mr. Plew stumbled, stammered, and lost the thread of his discourse.

"I beg your pardon," said the vicar, "I don't comprehend your last remark. I was saying that there are some pretty quaint bits of melody in those sonatas of Kozeluch. Miss Desmond plays the piano-forte part. Bring your flute some evening, and try them over with her. The piano-forte may be unlocked again now, I suppose. When I said that Sir John's stay involved no personal inconvenience to us, I reckoned on our being allowed to hear the voice of music once again."

"Mr. Plew's flute has the softest of voices, papa. I am sure its aërial breathings could not penetrate to the blue chamber."

"Ah, there, now—there, Miss Veronica—Miss Levincourt—you're chaffing me."

"Eh?" (with wide-opened eyes, and superb arching of the brows.)

"I beg pardon—laughing at me."

"How can you think so, Mr. Plew?"

"Oh, I know. But you are privileged, of course."

"Am I?"

"I mean young ladies in general are privileged to say what they please. I'm sure, now, that you don't really care about my flute playing. You would not like to hear it."

"But it is papa and Miss Desmond whom you play for. If they are satisfied, all is well. I don't pretend to be a virtuosa. And I will say this for your flute, Mr. Plew; it is very unobtrusive."

The sparkle of raillery in her eyes, the saucy smile on her lip, the half disdainful grace of her attitude, appeared to entrance the little surgeon. His eyes blinked as he looked at her. There was no revolt in his meek soul against the scarcely disguised insolence of her manner.

The vicar was a man of fine breeding. His daughter's behaviour to-night jarred on his taste. Mr. Levincourt did not usually trouble himself to observe, still less to correct, such shortcomings. But his interview with Sir John Gale had awakened old associations. He was conscious of the impression which his own polished address had made on his guest.

When Mr. Plew had departed, the vicar said, in a tone more of complaint than rebuke, "You should not tease that mild little man, Veronica. He does not understand raillery, and will either presume on it to become familiar, or else suffer from wounded feeling. Neither alternative is to be desired."

"Papa mio, he likes it!"

"But I do not. Besides, it is of you that I am thinking. Flippancy in a woman is, of all things, the most detestable. Not to speak of the matter on higher grounds" (the vicar habitually avoided all appeal to "higher grounds" in his non-professional moments); "it is utterly in bad taste—*mauvais genre*."

Veronica flushed high with anger, for her amour propre was stung; but by the time that she and Maud retired for the night, the cloud of temper had dispersed. Veronica came into Maud's room, and began chatting gaily about Mrs. Sheardown's dinner party.

"Maud," said she, "Maud, I have decided on amber—a good rich amber, you know. I shall wear an amber satin

sash with my white dress, and a streak of the same colour—just a band of it—in my hair."

"Very well."

"Very well? Are you in one of your frozen moods, Maud Hilda Desmond? If so, thaw as quickly as may be; I want to talk to you."

Maud wrapped a white dressing-gown around her, seated herself by the fire, and proceeded to loosen her straight silky hair from its plaits.

After a pause she said, "I do not wish to be frozen, Veronica; but your sudden changes of temperature are fatiguing. Just now, you were like a brooding thunder cloud. At present, all is sunshine and blue sky. Do you suppose you are likely always to find persons able and willing to follow these capricious variations?"

Veronica took this speech very meekly. "I can't help it, Maudie," said she.

"Yes, you can; you can command yourself when there is a sufficient object in view. You don't exhibit these vagaries in the presence of people whom you desire to charm."

"I wonder why I let you talk so to me! I am your elder by two years, you little solemn white owl!"

Maud quietly released the last coil of her hair from its bonds, and said nothing. Suddenly Veronica knelt down by her companion's side and clasped her arms round her waist. So she remained, still and silent for some minutes. Then she slid down into her favourite posture on the rug, and exclaimed, without looking up: "I wish I could be good like you, Maud!"

"Nonsense! Good like me? I am not very good. But we can all be better if we try hard."

"I cannot. No; I cannot. I—I—want so many things that good people despise—or pretend to despise."

"What things?"

"O, I don't know, all sorts of things. Is there nothing *you* want?"

"Plenty of things I should like. But I don't see how wanting things should prevent your being good."

"But I want vain, wicked, worldly, things, Maudie!"

"And do you think vain, wicked, worldly, things would make you happy?"

"Yes, I do. There! Don't look so scared and open your eyes so wide, white owl. That's the truth. You always advocate speaking the truth, you know. Good-night."

"Good-night, Veronica. You are in one of your perverse moods to-night. There is no use in arguing with you."

"Not a bit of use!"

"But you are wiser than your words. You know better."

"That's the worst of it! I wish I didn't know better. The fools are never troubled by knowing better. I know the better and want the worse. There now, you are frozen into an ice-maiden, again!"

Maud remained pale and silent, gazing straight before her.

Veronica waited a minute, lingering near the door, and then with a little defiant toss of the head, shrugged her shoulders and left the room, without another word.

The house was still; the vibrations of the last stroke of eleven, boomed out by the deep-voiced bell of St. Gildas, were dying away; the glow of the fire had died down to a faint red glimmer, when a white figure glided noiselessly to Maud's bedside.

"Maudie! Maudie! Are you asleep?"

"Veronica! What is it? What is the matter?"

"Nothing. Kiss me, Maud. I cannot sleep until you have done so."

Maud raised her head from the pillow and kissed the other girl's cheek.

"Good - night, dear Veronica," she whispered.

"God bless you, Maudie!"

A SUCCESS ON THE STAGE.

TWO-AND-TWENTY years have passed since the present writer, then for the first time making the acquaintance of celebrated places and people in London, had pointed out to him a tall wiry old man with bleared eyes, a grizzled moustache, and a general appearance of having often heard (as at the moment he was hearing), the chimes at midnight. A noticeable man, too, with his broad shoulders and sinewy hands showing the remains of great power, and with his tightly-fitting trousers—which in those days when men wore flowing garments looked even more peculiar than they would in these times—his enormous drab great-coat, and his low-crowned hat. This was Sir Whinny Trotman, whose claim to celebrity was, that he was the last of that famous band of amateur coachmen, who used to drive the stage-coaches in various parts of England: he being the identical person who would have a silver sandwich-box handed round among his passengers, and who, at the end of the journey, would come up and touch his hat to them for half-crowns. He was the last of them, and even he had retired from the box, for the coaching-days had retired from him. On the Brighton road there still ran one coach, "The

Age," but it went a round-about way by Leatherhead and Horsham, carried very few "through" passengers, and for its existence depended mostly on parcels. "Gentleman Brackenbury" too, one of the best whips and pleasantest fellows among professional coachmen, was reported to be driving a good team between Dorking station and Guildford town; but save in remote districts those were the only coaches extant. A box-coat of portentous size, with huge pockets and buttons as large as cheese-plates, made of mother-of-pearl and ornamented with cleverly executed pictures of stage-coaches, which stood in the windows of a tailor's shop in the Quadrant, and the spirited sketches of coaching incidents published by Messrs. Fores, were all that remained to show to the living generation the glories of the bygone time. The Four-in-hand Club, at one time so fashionable, had dwindled away to nothing. "You see occasionally in Hyde Park, one dismal old drag with a lonely driver," says Mr. Thackeray, writing so recently as 1854. And again, "Where are you, charioteers? Where are you, O rattling Quick-silver, O swift Defiance? You are past by racers stronger and swifter than you. Your lamps are out, and the music of your horns has died away."

But the whirligig of Time, which reproduces, slightly modified, the garments, the manners and customs, the tastes and pleasures, of our grandsires, as novelties for our sons, has brought coaching once more into fashion. This was to be expected. A love for horse-flesh is inherent in all Englishmen; the English coach-horse is a style of animal not to be met with in any other country; and in carriage-building and harness-making we are immeasurably ahead of the world. No wonder, then, that the old tastes should revive. No wonder that in the Park this season one has seen daily a dozen drags, each vieing with the other in the quality of its cattle, the taste of its appointments, the skill of its driver. No wonder that societies of gentlemen have started public coaches on various roads out of London. Coaches which they horse with their own teams, and generally drive themselves, for they are thus enabled to have all the pleasures of a private drag at a somewhat reduced expense, and they have a lovely country to drive through, and a destination to make for, instead of that never-varying circuit of the Park, that perpetual exchange of Bayswater for Kensington, and vice versa, which, after a time, must become soul-harrowing work.

Let us attend one of these most agreeable of "revivals," and see whether any of the romance of the road yet survives. So fast has the infection spread that whereas, three years ago, we could not have found a four-horse coach within a hundred miles of the metropolis, we can now take our choice of three different routes from London. We can go into Kent, and, in contented possession of the box-seat, enjoy simultaneously the lovely

scenery and the quaint idiomatic conversation of the coachman: a jovial, genial gentleman, who bears the whole of the expense of the affair. We can be carried into Berks under the auspices of a noble lord, or under those of his partner, that well-known sporting personage, Mr. Cherubim. (Ah, Cherubim, how long is it since you and I rode on a drag together for a trip from Oxford to Henley and Maidenhead, and how many of that pleasant company have "gone under" since that time!) Or, we can go to Brighton by the coach, the starting of which gave life to the present revival movement. That sounds pleasantest—a drive to Brighton, a swim at Brill's, a little dinner at the Albion, and home by the evening train. We decide for Brighton.

The Brighton coach starts from the Ship at Charing Cross punctually at eleven. When we arrive there, a few minutes before the time, a little crowd has already collected, which eyes the vehicle, the team, and the intending passengers, with curiosity mingled with admiration. There are boys with newspapers, and children with cigar-lights; but what has become of the man with the net of lemons, the man with the many-bladed knife—which he was always proving on his tattered leather glove, and the man with a silver watch-guard extended between the forefingers of his hands, who always used to haunt the White Horse Cellar and the Ship, on the departure of the coaches? While we are looking at the coach, which is beautifully built and hung, with an under carriage singularly light for its strength, and is coloured dark blue with red wheels, the honorary secretary introduces himself to us, and from him—bright, active, and intelligent—we learn some particulars of the business arrangements of the concern.

There are, it seems, five proprietors by whom the coach is horsed: one of them, who is perhaps the finest whip in England, providing the teams for two stages. The scheme was entered on as a hobby by these gentlemen, and as such it continues; but our informant expects that this year the balance sheet will show that the returns equal the expenses; not the wear and tear of the horses, of course, for, as we shall see, nearly all the teams are composed of valuable horses; but the corn-chandler's bill, the stabling and the wages of the professional coachman and guard. The professional coachman? Oh yes, there is always a professional coachman, ready to take the ribbons in case all the gentlemen should be engaged, and one of the strictest rules is that no amateur—the proprietors have been driving all their lives and can scarcely be regarded as amateurs—shall on any pretext be allowed to have anything to do with the horses. "I want to learn to drive, and I'm thinking of taking some shares in your coach!" said a young gentleman last summer. "When you have learned to drive, it will be time enough to think whether we will allow you to take any shares," was the reply. Our professional,

even when not driving, rarely misses a journey; he is heart and soul in the concern, and takes as much pride and interest in it as any of us. Here he is; let me introduce Mr. Tedder. (There is no reason why Alfred Tedder's name should not appear here. He was for many years a first-class coachman on the Oxford road, and, as we are assured, has the good word of every one who knows him.) Tedder will not drive to-day, however. This is rather a gala-day; three out of the five proprietors are coming down, and the first stage will be driven by the Colonel.

The busy hands are slipping over Big Ben's great face, the crowd of bystanding idlers is increased, the helpers are ready at the horses' heads, and there are other signs of departure. Two big sacks, one of them labelled as containing ice, are slung up beneath the back seat, two ladies are inside, and the outside passengers are enjoined to take their places. Two of the proprietors—brothers, portly, pleasant, jovial gentlemen, in figure and hearty geniality recalling the Cheeryble brothers—get up behind, where they are joined by Tedder and the guard. To us is allotted the honour of the box-seat. The others climb to their seats, then the Colonel swings himself up beside us, the helpers loose their hold on the horses, the horn sounds, and we are off. Whitehall is pretty full, Parliament-street is thronged, and there is a crowd on Westminster-bridge; but the Colonel, who is a slight, slim, wiry man of middle age, with a clear blue eye, which shows you at once that he could never be surprised or taken aback, heeds not such obstacles. With his whip in the socket, he quietly tools his team of four handsome brown horses along, talking to us that airiest and pleasantest gossip, that chit-chat which is so light and yet so difficult to sustain, which none but accomplished men of the world manage to rattle on with. Now, amidst stares of the populace and hat touches from all the omnibus drivers, we bowl along through that strange region between Westminster and Kennington Park, region of marine-store shops, fried-fish vendors, and cheap photographic artists. Elderly merchants and City men, who can afford to take things easily, are driving townward in their mail phaeton. On the box of one of the omnibuses we meet a well-known theatrical manager, deep in his newspaper; and at Kennington-gate cheery greetings are exchanged between several of our party and a weather-stained veteran, who was for many years a four-horse whip, but who, under pressure of circumstances, has descended to a 'bus. At Kennington-gate, did we say? That stronghold of tolls has been swept away, long since, and the actual turnpike-gate, over which there were so many hard fights on Derby days, may be seen close by Brixton-hill, having been bought by an omnibus proprietor, and converted into part of the fence for his property.

Now, through Streatham, where the new villas and the old brick houses, standing back from the road in their trim gardens, have an

air of health and comfort not unmingled with Dissent; where troops of young ladies, in regimental order, cast demure glances at us as we hurry by, and where the air rings with the overture to Semiramide and Czerny's exercises, which come pealing through the windows of the innumerable "seminaries" in the neighbourhood. Within the three-quarters of an hour we have done our first stage, and arrive at Croydon, where the "change" is awaiting us. The new team, having a longer and a heavier stage to get through, are of a different stamp—two roans, model coach-horses, and two bays. Now, we pass our first toll-bar, Foxley Hatch—pass it, too, unnoticed; for the novelty of the coach's appearance has worn off, and the tollman, secure of his money, does not trouble himself to rise from his seat. Here we come into close proximity with our rival, the rail, dropping down upon him just at what he, in his ridiculous language, calls Caterham Junction, and running parallel with him along that road which all Brighton travellers know so well, where the prettiest miniature farm lies between the railway and the road, and, in the distance, the white chalk quarry gleams in the green face of the hill. Just before arriving at Redhill, at one o'clock, the Hon. Sec., leaning over, tells us that the next stage is horsed by the squire's brother, and will probably be driven by the squire himself. The smile with which the intelligence is received, is false; the ardour with which the remarkable exclamation, "Oh, indeed?" is uttered is assumed; for, truth to tell, we have never heard of the squire, and have not the remotest idea who he is.

Not long are we left in doubt. The four magnificently matched grey horses—the only observable difference in them being that the leaders are a trifle lighter and more "peacocky" than the wheelers—are no sooner "to," than the stouter of the Cheeryble brothers presents himself, gives the team a rapid but apparently satisfactory look over, and then, with singular agility for such a heavily-built man, swings himself to the box. Not much doubt that the compliment paid to him of being the best whip in England is well deserved! One glance, like the celebrated "one trial" of the advertisement, will "prove the fact." Mark the way in which he holds the ribbons, his left hand well down on his thigh; the ease with which he slips into its proper place the rein which the dancing near leader had switched under its tail; the knowledge which points out the exact place where the break should be applied, and the quickness with which he works it. The Colonel had been anecdotal, not to say loquacious; the squire, though perfectly courteous, is not particularly communicative. He is a tall man, and he stands on the splashboard, backed up by, rather than sitting on, his box; so that conversation is more difficult, his mouth being, as it were, out of earshot. But it is evident that he does not *think talking business-like*, and contents himself with polite replies to leading questions,

and a perpetual refrain of sotto voce encouragement to the team, each member of which is addressed by name. So on, cheerily, up the steep red hill, and round the corner by the boys' school, where the lads in the playground give us a shrill shout of welcome, down the descent, and, at a hard gallop, over the glorious breezy Earlswood Common, so often looked at with longing eyes from the railway, and now visited at last! Far away, now, from omnibuses, theatrical managers, and ladies' schools. "Toot-toot!" Give them a taste of your horn, guard, and let them know we're coming. Pull off to your near side, Taylor, with your enormous cumbersome furniture-van, the two men in the paper caps and the green aprons sitting here, as in London, ever on the tail-board! Run to your leader's head, carter, for he does not like our looks, and is beginning to potter and shy, and will wheel round and have you all in the ditch in an instant, if you don't look out! Morning, farmer! Up goes the elbow of the good old boy's whip-hand in true professional salutation. Cheerily on, past haymakers, leaning on scythes and rakes, and gazing at us with hand-shaded eyes; past brown-skinned tramps, male and female, all sitting with their backs turned to the road, and their feet in the ditch in front of them, and who do not take the trouble to look round at us; past solitary anglers, seen afar off in distant windings of gleaming streams; past lovely ladies playing croquet on smooth lawns, and attended upon by gallant gentlemen, among whom the village curate is conspicuous, until the squire drops his left hand still lower, and brings us up, "all standing," at Lowfield Heath, where luncheon is awaiting us. And such a luncheon! arranged, not on the Mugby Junction system, but on the old-fashioned inn principle. Large smoking joint of prime roast beef, delicious potatoes, succulent peas, strawberries, and cheese, for two shillings! We suspect the strawberries were part of the "gala day;" we are certain something else was. For the placards hung about the room announced that in addition to the joint we were entitled to "half-a-pint of draught ale;" but we did not have draught ale; we were proffered refreshment from a fat bottle with a tinfoil cravat, and we felt, with Mr. Tennyson, that, on such an occasion,

Our drooping memory should not shun
The foaming grape of Eastern France.

So we took it. And the old lady who had been our inside passenger was of one mind with us and Mr. Tennyson. She tried the draught ale, and did not like it, and, beckoning to our friend, Mr. Tedder, who was apparently the only person in whom she believed, asked if she could not have some of "that"—designating the champagne-bottle. She was told that she could have some of it, and she did have some of it, and drank it, and then emulated the behaviour of Oliver Twist in asking for more. We were told that they often had old ladies as inside passengers by the coach. If all

are treated in this fashion, we don't wonder at it.

The favourite sarcasm of schoolmasters in old days to gobbling youth, that there was no hurry, the coach was not waiting, would have lost its sting on this occasion; for the coach was waiting, but there was no hurry. The proprietors of the Brighton coach are quite aware that they can enter into no competition with the rail; the physician, who is telegraphed for in case of life and death, the bagman, whose chance of securing a large order depends on the speed with which he arrives at his destination, will rattle down by the express. The coach is for those who have leisure, and who wish to enjoy the pleasures of fresh air and lovely scenery, in comfort, so a liberal half hour is allowed for luncheon, and then we start afresh, and after three stages, all admirably horsed, the squire draws up his chesnuts, his favourite team, before the Albion Hotel, on the Steyne at Brighton. And there stands the proprietor, whose talent for catering we proved in bygone years at those capital schools, the Ship at Greenwich, and the Star and Garter at Richmond. So we place ourselves in Mr. Lawrence's hands, letting him do as he likes with us for dinner, and rush off to get rid of the dust in a plunge at Brill's, and to put the keenest edge on to our appetites in a turn up the King's-road afterwards.

There can be no doubt that this is a most sensible and enjoyable airing. To a London man it is a splendid panacea for worries and overwork, and city dust and drouth. The novelty of the position makes him forget his business cares, the drive invigorates him, and the pleasant companionship always to be met with, takes him out of himself, and consigns stocks, and shares, and briefs, and leading articles, to temporary oblivion. If he be pressed for time he can come back to town by train, reaching home before eleven the same evening; if he have leisure, he can sleep in Brighton, pitching pebbles off the beach and asking the wild waves what they are saying, during the evening, and renewing his pleasurable impressions in his return journey on the coach the next day. And perhaps it is well for us occasionally to remember the Arabic proverb, that "Hurry is the Devil's," and that, like life, a journey has sometimes such pleasures that we need not fret eagerly to get to the end of it.

AS THE CROW FLIES.

DUE SOUTH.—CHEAM TO EPSOM.

JUST outside a village a little off the Brighton road, a village so leafy and embowered that twenty years ago the gardens were in summer twilight so noisy with nightingales, that dying persons in that retired hamlet have been known to have had their last trance-like sleeps painfully broken in upon by the sweet unceasing jangle, the crow, swooping down from his "coign of vantage" at St.

Paul's, alights on a grave avenue of old ancestral elms. Here you see the special tree of Surrey to perfection. The huge free-grown, close-grained limbs bear aloft with triumphant ease their thick, green clouds of foliage, and, meeting over head, cast a carpet of mottled shadows beneath. This avenue at Cheam (a place skirted by all persons who drive to the Derby) was one of the old approaches to Nonesuch, one of Queen Elizabeth's palaces. Henry the Eighth, following the deer from Hampton Court to the very foot of Banstead Downs, one day, in 1539, took a fancy to the quiet spot where he had rested and dined under the trees after the mort was blown and the deer broken up by the eager knives. He bought the manor of Sir Richard de Cuddington, in exchange for a Norfolk rectory, and, pulling down the old manor house and parish church, he began a palace. Leland calls it the "nulli que parem"—the matchless or "nonesuch"—but the king dying before it was finished, Queen Mary gave it to the Earl of Arundel, "in free socage, to hold of the honour of Hampton Court;" and the earl, for love of his old master, completed the palace.

Queen Elizabeth liked well the spot selected by her father, and often came here when the Earl of Arundel was its owner, and also when it passed to the earl's son-in-law, the Lumley. ("Did ye ever ken that Adam was a Lumley?" King James once said to a proud lord of this family who was boasting of his pedigree.) Eventually she bought the palace, and spent many of her later summers here. There her well-guarded maids of honour rambled and laughed between the close-cut green hedges, and her pretty pages played at the brim of the fountains, and Raleigh and his rivals clattered their rapiers up the flight of eight steps that led through the clock tower to the inner court, and grave men like Burleigh and Walsingham looked from the turret roof over the downland and the woodland, and keepers slew fallow deer under the elms, and many wise and foolish actors fretted their little hour upon the stage and then were seen no more. Here, especially, took place an interview that was the turning point in the fortune of the wrong-headed, rashly-brave Earl of Essex. This, the last of her favourites (Gloriana was only sixty-seven, thin as a herring, painted, and addicted to fuzzy red wigs, stuck with jewels, and ruffs as big as cart wheels), had distinguished himself by tossing his hat on shore at Cadiz, and leading the way to the capture of Spain's strongest fortress, where Raleigh captured and destroyed thirteen men-of-war and immense magazines of provisions and naval stores. The India fleet, with twenty millions of dollars, might have been also captured, but for the jealous opposition to the impetuosity of Essex. Proud Spain had never received such a blow in the teeth before, and threatened a second Armada. Essex—disdainful of all rivals, and always in a pet with the queen, who, provoked at his factious insolence, once struck him in the face at the council table—was sent by Burleigh,

the "old fox," who hated him, with great expectations to Ireland, to quell the rebellion of the O'Neil in Ulster. To the queen's alarm and infinite vexation, Essex wasted his time in Munster, and ended by concluding a treaty with Tyrone, tolerating the Catholic religion. On Michaelmas eve, about ten o'clock of the morning, Essex, booted and spurred and splashed with mud, even to his face, threw himself off his horse at the court gate of Nonesuch, made haste up to the privy chamber, and thence to the queen's bedchamber.

The queen was newly up but not dressed, and her hair all about her face. The earl knelt unto her, kissed her hands and had private speech, which, says a court letter-writer of that day, "seemed to give him great contentment, for coming from her Majesty, to go shift himself in his chamber, he was very pleasant, and thanked God though he had suffered much trouble and storms abroad, he found a sweet calm at home. The courtiers were aghast at the temerity of this coup de main, but all at first seemed halcyon weather with the returned favourite. About eleven the earl, resplendent in satin and jewels, went up again to the queen, and had a gracious interview of an hour and a half. Then slight symptoms of a squall appeared, and after dinner her Majesty seemed much changed for so small a time, and began to question sharply about his precipitate return, and to complain of his leaving suddenly, and all things at hazard. She appointed that very afternoon a council where the lords might hear him. That same night between ten and eleven a commandment came from the queen to my Lord of Essex, that he should keep his chamber, and on the following Monday he was committed to the custody of the keeper at York House. When Sir John Harrington, her godson, went to the queen, she chafed, walked to and fro, and cried, snatching at his girdle,

"By G——, sir, I am no queen! That man is above me. Who gave him command to come here so soon? I did send him on other business. Go home!"

"And home I went," says Harrington. "I did not stay to be bidden twice. If all the Irish rebels had been at my heels, I should not have made better speed."

Essex was equally tossed by passion. Raleigh says of him, "he uttered strange words, bordering on such strange designs, that made me hasten forth and leave his presence. Thank heaven! I am so far home, and if I go in such trouble again I deserve the gallows for a meddling fool. The queen never knoweth how to humble the haughty spirit, the haughty spirit knoweth not how to yield, and the man's soul seemed tossed to and fro like the waves of a troubled sea."

His last letter repulsed, the earl grew desperate, and resolved to seize the queen and win over her councillors. To his house near Temple Bar he invited the leading Puritans, Scotch emissaries, and all disaffected noblemen and captains. In February, 1601, took place

his foolish outbreak, and before the same month was over the head of Essex fell from his shoulders in the courtyard of the Tower. What really cost him his head, said Raleigh, was not the departure from Ireland, or the ill-hatched rebellion, but his saying that Elizabeth "was an old woman, as crooked in mind as in body." Perhaps, however, she had never forgotten being seen without her wig—who knows? Nonesuch was given by the parliament to Algernon Sidney and General Lambert; afterwards, during the Plague, the office of the Exchequer was transferred there; and after that Charles the Second gave the palace to the Duchess of Cleveland, who, on the same principle which makes thieves instantly melt stolen plate, pulled it down, sold the materials, and divided the park into farms. There are but few traces of the palace now, only one long deep ditch, always wet in winter, which is called "Diana's Ditch" by the poor people, and is supposed to be the site of a great Diana and Actæon fountain. A sorry ending. In the centre of a ploughed field, in a rejoicing old age, there stands a wonderful elm, twenty-two feet six inches in girth and eighty feet high. It is still full of vigour, and one of the earliest trees in the neighbourhood to bud and bloom. The legend is that it springs from the site of the palace kitchen, but it is really one of those "Queen Elizabeth elms" under which, when hunting, she used to stand with her small steel crossbow to kill the deer when driven past her.

Cheam, during the great Plague, was selected as the site of a school for citizens' children, which still flourishes, and an old wooden house called "Whitehall" yet exists, where business of the palace used to be transacted. The tower of the old church, a square ugly stump, has a large clamp bracing it together, to restrain a crack which gaped open as long ago as when Archbishop Laud was in prison. Laud had been curate here, and being a superstitious man, who even shuddered at curious spots coming on his nails, he trembled at this omen, lost heart, and soon after lost his head.

And now the crow bears away with a slant flight to Banstead Downs, that rolling prairie all in a golden blaze with gorse blossom, and spotted purple with the dry, fragrant network of wild thyme, and here, where the throbbing windmill tosses its broad giant arms, the larks are up by dozens above the clover and the green corn that now, with a grey bloom on every blade, undulates in rippling waves. Miles of blue distance, and the crow sees St. Paul's, no bigger than a chimney ornament in the far distance; Windsor Castle, visible to a keen eye, appears no bigger than a toy castle; and on Penge Hill a little diamond speck, which is the Crystal Palace, is pointed out by the golden finger of an admiring sunbeam. By day the smoke-cloud of the monster city broods on the eastern horizon like a phantom ship, and at night the glare of its million lamps illuminates the sky.

There is no certainty as to when racing began at Epsom Downs; but most antiquaries believe in the reign of James the First, who loved a good horse and liked to sweep up a stake. Certain it is that in 1648, six hundred Cavalier gentlemen assembled at Epsom Downs under pretence of a horse race, and marched from there to Reigate. Major Audely, with five troops of horse and three of foot, overtook them at Ewell, skirmished with them in Nonesuch Park, and charged and routed them on a hill half-way to Kingston. The Duke of Buckingham—a noble, brave, handsome youth—set his back to an elm tree, and there fought desperately at bay till he was struck down. At Kingston the Cavaliers rallied, and drove back the Puritan cavalry. The Epsom races can only be clearly traced back as far as the year 1780, when the famous Madcap won the prize, and proved the best plate horse in England. The races were at first held in the spring and autumn, and being then comparatively local, began at eleven, and were conducted in a quiet leisurely way, the company usually trooping off to the town for a general dinner after the first and second heat, and returning to another tranquil race after their wine. In 1825, sixty thousand persons was thought a grand assemblage at the Derby. The London, Dorking, Worthing, and Chichester coaches brought down the few visitors, but there were no trains to pour their two hundred thousand at once upon the town. The day had not become the carnival it now is: no green boughs, false noses, or oak apples enlivened the noisy, jostling procession. It must have been a sober trotting along of long-coated men in cocked-hats for a mere day's fresh air and pic-nic.

Epsom, a place proud of its traditions, has a name of very doubtful derivation. Some etymologists trace it back to Ebbs-ham (the village of the Ebb), from an intermittent spring that here gushes out of the chalk, and at certain periods is drawn back into the earth; others from the Princess Ebba, who was baptised A.D. 660, and gave her hand to one of the earliest of the Saxon kings. The palace of the fair Christian stood where Epsom Court now is. In Doomsday Book, Ebesham stands good for thirty-four villains and six bondmen, two churches, two mills, and a wood that fed twenty swine. The manor belonged to the monastery of Chertsey, about whose Black Abbot there is a legend preserved, not unworthy of the crow's record. A certain gay princess became enamoured of a handsome abbot of the river-side monastery, and, unable to allure the holy man from his vows of celibacy, the wanton lady sent a troop of her maidens to lie in ambuscade for the austere priest, and bring him by gentle force to her castle. The maidens fell upon him and overpowered him. The abbot prayed only for time to repeat his prayers at the altar of a neighbouring chapel; and his captors laughingly granted his request. Prostrating himself before the altar, the abbot prayed to the Virgin to save him by rendering him at once

loathsome to all women. The Virgin granted his prayer, and when the abbot returned to the rejoicing escort he was black as a negro, and an object of horror, and not of love. The manor of Epsom, seized by Henry the Eighth, was given by him to one of his companions at the tournament, Sir Nicholas Carew, of Beddington, who was soon after executed for treason. Queen Elizabeth gave it to Edward Darcy, a groom of the Privy Chamber, who soon sold it to pay his gambling debts.

Now, Muse, arise and sing of Epsom Salts! It was the discovery of this nauseous but efficacious sediment that first made Epsom famous. A donkey, and not a philosopher, first discovered the medical spring in 1618, by wisely refusing to drink its waters. Fuller and Aubrey both mention the pool as aluminous, and with a deposit of snowy flakes. About 1619, certain learned physicians, following in the footsteps of the learned ass, analysed the water and pronounced it to be impregnated with "a calcareous nitre," or rather a soluble, bitter, cathartic salt, the practical effects of which were beyond all argument.

About 1621 the wells were enclosed and a shed erected for patients. The doctors soon began to sing the praises of Epsom. In Charles the Second's time, Shadwell lays the scene of one of his plays at Epsom, and introduces a bubbling projector who proposes to supply London with fresh air in bladders from Banstead Downs. Nell Gwynne, at this time under the protection of Lord Buckhurst, one of her early lovers, lived in a house next the King's Head Hotel, now a shop, some years ago remarkable for its low bay windows and balcony. There Nell, tossing her golden curls, used to sit laughing and bantering, watching the company parading to and fro. She remained always fond of Epsom, and Charles afterwards built her stables near Pitt's-place, close to the parish church. In 1723 a fantastic old writer named Toland, who concocted *An Itinerary* through England, and who had known Epsom in Queen Anne's time, when dull Prince George of Denmark came there to drink the waters, bequeathed us a curious picture of a fashionable country spa in the old time. It seems to have been then a long, straggling village about a mile in length, open to the corn-fields and the fresh breezy down, a church at one end, Lord Guildford's palace (Durdians) at the other, and gardens and trees before every door. The ruddy-faced country people rode round daily with fish, venison, and Banstead Down mutton, fruit and flowers, and bargained with the court and city ladies, who made it their custom of a morning to sit on benches outside their doors.

Epsom, at this period, boasted two rival bowling greens, to which "the company" devoted themselves every evening, especially on Mondays, music playing most of the day, and dancing sometimes crowning the night. Indeed this intense coxcomb Toland tells his fair correspondent Eudoxia that "a fairer circle was not to be seen at Carlsbad or Aix-la-

Chapelle, as at Epsom High Green and Long Room on a public day." The raffing shops brought together as many sharpers as Tunbridge; and the writer takes care to observe "that it was very diverting for a stander-by to observe the different humours and passions of both sexes, which discover themselves with less art and reserve at play than on any other occasion; the rude, the sullen, the noisy, and the affected, the peevish, the covetous, the litigious and the sharpening, the proud, the prodigal, the impatient, and the impertinent, become visible foils to the well-bred, prudent, modest, and good-humoured." At the taverns, inns, and coffee-houses, all distinctions of Whig and Tory were forgotten. After an early dinner, the visitors to the wells rode on the Downs or took coach for the Ring, where, on a Sunday evening, this detestable prig had actually counted as many as sixty vehicles. Saturday, when the husbands of the city ladies came from town, was the great evening for display; and, next to that, Monday, when there was a public ball in the Assembly Rooms. On Sundays, in the forenoon, the ever restless "company" that did not ride the four-mile course past the old warren (still existing) to Carshalton, drove to Boxhill, where they partook of refreshments in arbours out among the trees.

Epsom was no doubt a pretty countrified, quaint place when Toland (who must have been a stupendous bore) was there, for nearly all the houses had porticos of clipped elms, lime trees, and an avenue of trees shaded the long terrace that ran from the watchhouse (where the clock tower now stands) as far as the chief tavern, now the Albion Hotel. The citizens and gentlemen took breakfast and supper *à fresco* under these whispering bowers, and pretty Hogarthian pictures the groups must have formed.

"By the conversation of those walking in these avenues," says Toland, "you would fancy yourself to be this minute on the Exchange, and the next at St. James's; one while in an East India factory, and another while with the army in Flanders [how they swore there, Uncle Toby!], or on board the fleet on the ocean; nor is there any profession, trade, or calling, that you can miss of here either for your instruction or your diversion." Indeed, considering the races and packs of hounds, the angling in the Mole, and the rides on the Downs, one can scarcely wonder that, as Toland says, the place was well filled with bankrupts, fortune-hunters, crazed superannuated beaux, married coquettes, intriguing prudes, richly dressed waiting-maids, and complimenting footmen.

By-and-by knavery and quackery invaded the wells. A rascally apothecary, named Levingstone, started a sham new wells, gave concerts and balls, bought and shut up the real spring, and procured testimonials of cures and medical certificates (you can't do that sort of thing now). The cures began to cease, the *restless company* to grow shy. The poor

neglected old spring still exists, and is as full of sulphate of magnesia as ever, but no one cares to be cured by it now.

STALLS.

It may not have occurred to you, serene reader, to trouble yourself much concerning the Philosophy of Stalls, if, indeed, you have ever thought it worth your while to inquire whether there was anything philosophical connected with a stall. To my mind there is, and much. To me a stall typifies, in an intense degree, the quality of selfishness. I draw a direct alliance between a stall and celibacy. I hold the possession of a stall to be linked with the ideas of independence, of isolation from, and superiority to, the rest of mankind. In a stall, properly so termed, you cannot put two people. The stalled ox is alone, and may look with infinite contempt on the poor sheep huddled together in a fold; the cobbler who lived in his stall, which served him for kitchen and parlour and all, was, I will go bail, a bachelor. Robinson Crusoe, for a very long time, occupied a stall, and was monarch of all he surveyed. When Man Friday came, the recluse began to yearn to mingle with the world again. Diogenes in his tub perfectly fulfils the idea of an installed egotist. From his tub-stall he could witness at leisure the entire grand opera of Corinth. I have heard of a royal duke—one of the past generation of royal dukes; burly, bluff princes in blue coats and brass buttons, who said everything twice over, drank hard, swore a good deal, and were immensely popular at the Crown and Anchor and the Thatched House Taverns—who, being in Windsor, one Sunday afternoon, thought he would like to attend divine service in St. George's Chapel. Of course he was a Knight of the Garter, and had his stall in the old gothic fane, with his casque and banner above, and a brass plate let in to the oaken carving, recording what a high, mighty, and puissant prince he was. The chapel happened to be very crowded, and as H. R. H. essayed to pass through the throng towards his niche in the choir, a verger whispered him, deferentially, that a distinguished foreign visitor, his Decrepitude the Grand Duke of Pfenningwurst-Schinkenbraten, had been popped into his stall. "Don't care a rush—a rush," quoth H. R. H., poking his walking-cane into the spine of a plebeian in front of him. "Want to get to my stall—my stall."

And from it, I suppose, he eventually succeeded in ousting the intruder from Germany. Was not H. R. H. in the right? His stall was his vine and his fig-tree, and who was there to make him afraid?

So much for stalls in the abstract. Practically, a stall may be defined as a place of occupation, in relative degrees, of a canon, a chorister, a cow, a cobbler, or a connoisseur. To study stalls most profitably in their ecclesiastical or monastic aspect, you should go to Flanders or to Spain. In the grand old cathedrals in those countries, the traveller has always free access to the choir, and can take his surfeit of contemplation of the stalls. They will be found, to the observant mind, replete with human interest. They may be peopled with priests. Pursy prebendaries, dozing the doze of the just, and dreaming placidly, perchance, of good fat capon and dotted cream, while the brawny choirmen at the lecterns are thundering from huge oak-bound and brass-clamped folios, on the parchment pages of which corpulent minims and breves flounder over crimson lines; pale, preoccupied priests, fretfully crimping the folds of their surplices, and enviously eyeing my Lord Archbishop yonder, awfully enthroned, with his great mitre on his head, and his emerald ring glancing on the plump, white hand which he complacently spreads over the carved arm of his chair of state. Will they ever come to sit in that chair? those pale, preoccupied men may be thinking. Will they ever wear a mitre, and hold out their hands for an obedient flock to kiss? Or will dignity and power and wealth fall to the lot of those drowsy prebendaries.

More absorbing, even, in interest to the stalls in the choir of a cathedral, are those in a convent chapel. The reason is, I suppose, that a monk has always been to me a mystery. A nun I can more easily understand, for the monastic state, in its best and purest acceptation, is a dream or an ecstasy; and there are vast numbers of women who pass their whole lives in a dreamy and ecstatic frame of mind, and in a species of unobtrusive hysterics. But the monk, with his manhood, and his great strong frame, and the fire of ambition lambent in his eye, and his lips firm set in volition, always puzzles me. Continental physicians will tell you that in every monastery there will be found a certain proportion of mad monks, friars who have strange lunes, and hear voices while they are sweeping out the chapel or extinguishing the altar candles,

and to whom the saints and angels in the pictures on the walls are living and breathing personages. I remember a dwarfish Cappuccino at Rome once executing a kind of holy jig before Guido's famous painting of the Archangel vanquishing the Demon, and, as he jigged, taunting the fiend on the canvas on the low estate to which he had fallen, and derisively bidding him to use his claws and fangs. Nor do I think that I was ever more terrified in my life than by the behaviour of a gaunt young friar in the Catacombs of San Sebastiano, who, opposite the empty tomb of a renowned martyr, suddenly took to waving his taper above his head, and to abusing the Twelve Cæsars. He was our guide, and I thought the candle would go out. But mad monks, or dreamy or ecstatic monks, are sufficiently rare, it is to be surmised. Most of the wearers of the cowl and sandals with whom I have made acquaintance, seemed to be perfectly well aware of what they were about; and a spirit of shrewd and pungent humour and drollery is not by any means an uncommon characteristic of male inmates of the cloister.

As for a Knight of the Garter in his stall, I regard him simply as an Awful Being. Understand that, to strike one with sufficient awe, he should be, not in plain dress, but in the "full fig" of his most noble order: a costume more imposing than the full uniform of the captain of a man-o'-war; and *that*, backed by the man-o'-war herself in the offing, can be warranted to send any black king on the West Coast of Africa into fits. But a K.G., with his garter on, with his sweeping velvet robe, with his collar and his George, with his tassels and badges and bows of ribbons, next to Solomon in all his glory is the most sumptuous sight I can conceive. The very stall he sits in, is historical; a knight of his own name occupied it three hundred years ago. It bears brazen chronicle of the doughtiest barons that ever lived. What should one do to get made a K.G., and to earn the privilege of sitting in such a stall? Would the genius of Shakespeare or Dante, would the learning of Boyle or Milton, would the imagination of a Tennyson, the graphic powers of a Millais, the researches of a Faraday—would even the giant intellect of a Brougham, help a man in the climbing upward to that stall? Not much, I fancy. Its occupancy is to be obtained only by one process, ridiculously simple, yet to be mastered only by very few children of humanity. "Vous vous êtes

donné la peine de naître," says Figaro to Count Almaviva, in the play. To be K.G.'d, you must take the trouble to be born of the K.G. caste.

But envy, avaunt! Social fate is not without its compensations, and there are stalls and stalls. Lend me a guinea, and for a whole evening, from eight to nearly midnight, I can sit supreme in a stall, solitary, grand, absolute; for who shall dare to turn me out? The stall is mine, to have and to hold corporeally until the curtain has fallen on the last tableau of the ballet, and (in imagination at least) I can hang my banner and my casque over my stall, and deem myself a high, mighty, and puissant prince. As the process, put into practice, might interfere with the comfort of the patrons of the Royal Italian Opera, I content myself with hanging my overcoat over the back of my stall, and placing my collapsible Gibus beneath it. I notice a large party of beautiful dames and damsels, in a box on the pit tier, who, I am vain enough to think, are intently inspecting me through their opera-glasses. I plume myself. I pull down my wristbands, I smooth my shirt-front, and caress the bows of my cravat. I turn the favourite facet of my diamond ring well on to the box on the pit tier. If you are the sun, shall you not shine? I am taken, I fondly hope, for one of the Upper Ten. I am aware, from eyesight acquaintance with the aristocracy, that my neighbour on the right, with the purple wig, the varnished pumps, and the ear trump, is Field Marshal Lord Viscount Dumdum, that great Indian hero; and that the yellow-faced little man on my left, with the yellow ribbon at his button-hole, is the Troglodyte ambassador. Behind me is Sir Hercules Hoof, of the Second Life Guards. In front of me is the broad back—I wish, in respect to the back, that it wasn't quite so broad—of Mr. Bargebeam, Q.C. How are that family in the pit tier to know that I am not a nobleman, a diplomatist, a guardsman, or a Queen's Counsel? I am clean. I had my hair dyed the day before yesterday. My boots are polished, my neckcloth is starched stiff: my stall is as big as anybody else's. How is beauty in the boxes to tell that I came in (maybe) with an order.

The playhouse stall is a thoroughly modern innovation, and even the pit of the Italian theatres of the Renaissance was destitute of seats. When Sterne first visited the opera in Paris, the groundlings stood to witness the performance, and sentinels with

fixed bayonets were posted to appease tumults, as in the well-known case quoted in the "Sentimental Journey," when the irate dwarf threatened to cut off the pigtail of the tall German. I am old enough to remember when the pittites in the Scala at Milan stood. You paid, I think, an Austrian florin—one and eightpence—for bare admission to the house, and then you took your chance of lighting upon some lady who would invite you to a seat in her box; or some bachelor acquaintance who, having had enough of the performance, would surrender to you his reserved seat, near the orchestra, for the rest of the evening. Seated pits have always been common in English theatres, owing to the strong determination of the people to make themselves comfortable whenever it was possible to do so; and these reserved seats of the Scala were the beginning of the exclusive seats we call stalls. They are not older than the era of the dominion of the Austrians in Lombardy, after the downfall of Napoleon the First. There were many Milanese nobles not wealthy enough to take boxes for the season, and too proud to sponge on their friends every evening for a back seat in a "palco," and, too patriotic to mingle in the standing-up area with the Austrian officers who, according to garrison regulations, were admitted to the Scala at the reduced price of ninepence halfpenny. So the manager of the Scala hit upon the crafty device of dividing the rows of benches near the orchestra, into compartments, each wide enough to accommodate a single person, and the seats of which could be turned up as in the choir of a cathedral. Moreover, these seats were neatly fitted with hasps and padlocks, so that the subscriber could lock up his seat when, between the acts, he strolled into the caffè for refreshment. Perhaps he was absent from Milan during the whole operatic season; and, if he did not choose to lend the key of his stall to a friend of the right political way of thinking, the seat remained inexorably closed. The system had a triple charm: First, the subscriber could revel to the fullest extent in the indulgence of that dog-in-the-manger-like selfishness, which I have held to be inseparably connected with stall-holding; next, he could baffle the knavish boxkeepers, with whom in an Italian theatre you can always drive an immoral bargain, and by a trifling bribe secure a better seat than that for which you have originally paid; finally he could obviate the possibility of his stall being contaminated

by the sedentary presence of any Austrian general of high rank who happened to be an amateur of Legs. High-handed as were the proceedings of the Tedeschi in Italy, they were wisely reluctant to interfere with the social habits of the people.

Just before the great French Revolution, it became the fashion to place arm-chairs close to the orchestra of the academy of music for the use of noble visitors, who came down from their boxes to take a closer survey of the coryphæes; but these were fauteuils at large; they were few in number, and could be shifted from place to place at will. Veritable stalls are those which, albeit they are fitted with arm-rests, are still immovably screwed to the floor; and such stalls, old playgoers will bear me out, are things of very recent introduction in our theatres. The pit of Her Majesty's Theatre was once the resort of the grandest dandies in London. Going over the new structure the other day, I observed that the pit proper had been almost entirely suppressed, and that stalls monopolised seven-tenths of the sitting room of the ground area. In English theatres a similar monopoly has been from year to year gradually gaining strength. The most rubbishing little houses have now numerous rows of stalls, from which bonnets are of course banished; and the pit is being quietly elbowed out of existence. The "third row of the pit" was once a kind of bench of judgment—I don't say of justice—on which those tremendous dispensers of dramatic fame and fortune, the critics, sat. Our papas and mammas did not despise the pit of old Drury; and I have heard tell of a lady of title who paid to the pit to see Master Betty, and who took with her a bag of sandwiches, and some sherry in a bottle. I think I heard tell that she lost her shoe in the crowd before the doors were opened.

Should this remarkable extension of the stall system be considered as a blessing or an evil? Has it not tended to the vast increase of selfishness, superciliousness, and the pride of place? Dear sir, if I were a Professor of Paradoxes, I might tell you that the more selfish, the more supercilious, and the prouder of our places we are, the likelier will be the attainment of universal happiness. I might whisper to you that virtue is only selfishness in a sublime degree. But I am a professor of nothing; and I dread paradoxes—having had a relative once who was afflicted with them, and died. So I go back to stalls.

The stalled ox, and the stalled cows in the byres of Brock, in Holland, with their tails tied up to rings in the rafters, I leave to their devices, for my talk is of men and not of beasts. Just lovingly do I glance at the cobbler in his stall—a merry man with twinkling eyes, a blue-black mazzard, and somewhat of a copper nose, for ever cuddling his lapstone, smoothing his leather with sounding thwacks, drawing out his waxed string, working and singing, and bandying repartee with the butchers' boys and the fishwives passing his hutch. I would Mr. Longfellow had sung of that cobbler; for as many tuneful things could be said about Crispin, as about the Village Blacksmith. That he has been left unsung, I mourn, sincerely; for times change and types of humanity vanish, and I am beginning to miss that cobbler. Metropolitan improvements are unfavourable to him; our pride and vanity militate against him; for somehow we don't care about seeing our boots mended in public, now-a-days. In old times the cobbler's stall was permitted to nestle in the basement of mansions almost aristocratic in their respectability; but, at present, no architect would dream of building a new cobbler's stall in a new house, and the old ones are fast disappearing. Crispin has risen in the world. He has taken a shop, and "repairs ladies' and gentlemen's boots and shoes with punctuality and despatch."

The term "stall," as applied to the board on tressels, or supported, perchance, by a decayed washing-tub, laid out with apples, sweetstuff, or oysters, and presided over by an old Irishwoman with a stringless black bonnet flattened down on a mob cap, I consider a misnomer. It lacks the idea of exclusive possession which should attach to a stall. The apple, or sweetstuff, or oyster woman, is but a tenant at will. She has no fee simple. She may be harried by the police, and petitioned against by churlish shopkeeping neighbours, jealous of her poor outdoor traffic. Drunken roysterers may overturn her frail structure; a reckless Hansom cab-driver may bring her to irretrievable crash and ruin. Rival apple-women may compete with her, at the opposite street corners, and passing costermongers, with strong-wheeled barrows, may gird at her, and disparage her wares. 'Tis not a stall, at which she sits, but a stand, a mere thing of tolerance and sufferance: here to-day and gone to-morrow, if the Road Man chooses despitefully to use poor Biddy. But once give me sitting room in

a cathedral stall, and by cock and pye, I will not budge! You may threaten to dis-establish and disendow me, but I will carry my stall about with me, as old gentlemen at the sea-side carry their camp-stools. And if at last, by means of a measure forced on an unwilling nation by ministers more abandoned in their principles, Sir, than Scjanus, Empson, Dudley, Polignac, Peyronnet, or the late Sir Robert Walpole, you declare that my stall no longer exists, you shall compensate me for it at a rate as rich as though I had always had it clamped with gold, and stuffed with bank notes.

TO A LITTLE HUSWIFE.

O little Huswife clean and spruce,
Thy use one heart divines;
A rosy apple, full of juice,
And polish'd—till it shines!
A tidy, tripping, tender thing,
A foe to lazy litters,
A household angel, tidying
Till all around thee glitters!
To see thee in thy loveliness,
So prudish and so chaste;
No speak upon the cotton dress
Girdled around thy waist;
The ankle peeping white as snow
Thy tuck'd-up kirtle under;
While shining dishes, row on row,
Behind thee, stare and wonder!
While round thy door the millions call,
While the great markets fill,
Tho' public sorrow strike us all,
Singing thou workest still;
Yea, all thy care and all thy lot
Is ever, sweet and willing,
To keep one little household spot
As clean as a new shilling!
The crimson kitchen firelight dips
Thy cheeks until they glow;
The white flour makes thy finger tips
Like rosebuds dropt in snow,
When all thy little gentle heart
Flutters in exultation
To compass, in an apple tart,
Thy noblest aspiration!
O Huswife, may thy modest worth
Keep ever free from wrong.
Blest be the house and bright the hearth
Thou blassest all day long!
And nightly, may thy sleep be sound,
While o'er thee, softly, stilly,
The curtains close, like leaves around
The hush'd heart of the lily!

AN EXPERIENCE.

IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER II.

WHEN I was again aware of anything that could have belonged to the real world—and not to the dreadful world of horrors, some terrible, some grotesque, in which my diseased brain had, during an inexplicable period, lived such life as it had known—I was in my own room in Strath-cairn-street. One of the first things I consciously noticed and thought about, was

the fact that my bed had been moved, from the sleeping and dressing closet in which it usually stood, out into the open room.

My dreamy eyes took this fact in slowly; after a while, my drowsy brain languidly decided that this meant I had been some time ill, and that the bed had been moved in order to give me more air.

This settled, my weak mind was free to take note of, and feebly to speculate about, other facts.

A woman sat at work not far from my bedside. Which of the hospital nurses would this be, I wondered. She was working by the light of a shaded lamp. This was night, then, I supposed, or, at least, evening.

Was it summer or winter?

There was no fire burning in the grate, and, by the moving to and fro of a blind, I knew a window was open; so I concluded it was summer.

Night-time and summer-time. I had, then, settled something.

Next, who was this woman? I seemed to need to settle this also.

I could not see her face from where I lay. I watched the swift out-flying and return of the busy hand, and wondered about her, and impatiently fretted for her to turn round towards me, that I might see her face.

But she worked on.

I remember a lady once saying to me (long years after this time, but when she said it this scene returned upon me), "Work, indeed! needle-work!" she spoke with a bitter intonation and an infinite contempt. "Amuse myself with my needle! How often have I been counselled to do that! Such a sweet, soothing, quiet, gracious employment! So it is, for the satisfied, the happy, the occupied. Nothing can be sweeter than to sit at one's needle through a long summer-day, and dream over one's happiness, and think out one's thoughts. But if one be not happy, and if one's thoughts be dangerous? Or, if one be utterly weary and ennuyée, and the mind seems empty of all thought?"

"To you men it is all one. To see a woman sitting at her needle makes you content. You think she is safe, out of mischief, just sufficiently amused, and so suitably occupied! Not too much engrossed to be ready to listen to and to serve your lordships; not so far ennuyée as to be disposed to make exacting claims upon your attention and your sympathy.

"Your eyes rest on her with satisfaction; she forms such a charming picture of housewifely repose and industry—'Ohne Hast ohne Rast.' You like to let your eyes rest upon her when you choose to look up from your paper, your review, or your wine. You feel at liberty to study her at your leisure, as you might a picture. It never occurs to you that mocking, miserable, mad thoughts may be haunting her brain—that passion, desperation, despair, or that utter weariness, worse than all, may be in her soul!"

This woman, sitting by the shaded lamp in my room, worked on and on.

By-and-by, some lines of the throat and bust and shoulders began to be suggestive to my slow brain. They seemed to belong to some remembered person. To whom?

As well as I could see, this woman was dressed in white; a white, short gown, such as the peasant women wear, open at the throat, loose at the sleeve; probably because of the heat, she had taken off her outer dress. As I was straining to remember, a great sense of pressure upon my brain, descending on me, and grasping me with the tightening grasp of a cold and heavy hand, stopped me. I should have swooned into sleep, but just then the woman laid down her work, looked at a watch hanging near her, rose, and came towards the bed.

Immediately, I closed my eyes; but voluntarily.

She came close, bent over me, as if listening for my breath. I felt her breath: was conscious even of the warmth and fragrance of her vitality, as she stooped over me. Presently she laid her hand upon my clammy forehead.

Instinct revealed to me who she was: without opening my eyes, I *saw* her. A cold sweat of horror broke out over me; such life as was left me, seemed oozing away through my pores; I was ready to sink into a swoon of death-like depth.

But I heard these words:

"That he may not die, great God, that he may not die!" And they arrested me on the brink of that horrible sinking away, to hold me on the brink instead of letting me fall through.

Somehow, those words, though they saved me for that moment, did not remove my sense of horror and fear, any more than is the victim who knows himself singled out for death by slow torture, comforted and reassured by the means taken to bring him back from his first swoon to consciousness of his next agony.

Was it, that physical weakness, and nearness to death, gave me clearer vision than that with which I saw later, when my senses had gathered power?

It was *fear*. I now experienced—there is no denying it—a most horrible fear. A shrinking of the spirit and of the flesh.

Why was I given over to her?

Was this another world, in which she had power given her to torment me? Was this my hell?

I, weak as a child, was alone with her. That awful woman with the terrible eyes, and the arms uplifted to curse me! The woman of my dread and dreadful dreams and fever-fancies.

Here, I believe, the icy waters of that horrible cold swoon closed over my consciousness.

But by-and-by (and whether after moments, hours, or even days, I had no means of knowing), when I felt the gentleness of the hand that was busy about me—wiping the clammy moisture from my forehead, bathing it with ether, holding to my nostrils a strong reviving essence, wetting my stiff lips with brandy; when I felt a soft strong arm under my neck, slightly raising my head to lean it on the yielding breast—when I felt the soothing comfort of the warmth, the softness, the fragrance of vitality, after the wormy chill of the grave, whose taste and smell seemed to linger in my mouth and nostrils—then it seemed not hell but heaven to which I was delivered.

Presently she gave me to drink some restorative medicine which was measured out ready for me. I swallowed it. She wiped my lips. I closed my eyes. Silence was, as yet, unbroken between us.

That medicine was strong stuff: a few moments after I had taken it, life, and conscious delight in the sense of life, went tingling through me.

Almost afraid to speak, and yet too full of wonder to remain silent, after I had for some moments listened to the steady, somewhat heavy, pulsations of the heart so near which I leaned, I asked:

"Have I been long ill?"

"A month."

She had paused before she spoke, and her breast had heaved high—was it, I have wondered since, in proud disgust to bear my hated head upon it?

She did not look at me as she spoke, I knew, for I didn't feel her breath.

"What sort of illness?"

"Congestion of the brain."

"Is the danger past?"

"If you can be kept from dying of weakness."

"And how comes it that *you* nurse me?"

"I have given myself up to be a nurse."

"And have you nursed me all this month?"

"No, not the first week: not till after my child was buried."

The tone of that last answer made me shudder. It was so unnatural, in its perfect freedom from all emotion.

"I shall tire you," I said; "lay me down."

Fear was regaining its empire over me.

She did as I asked her, and, after she had arranged my pillows and the bedclothes neatly, moved to her work-table. The delicious sense of warm life was fast dying away out of me.

"Are you Mrs. Rosscar?" I asked, presently, raising myself on one elbow, for an instant, to look at her.

"I am your nurse," she answered me, without looking up from her work.

I made another effort to try and get things explained and disentangled; but they were too much for me. Before I had framed another question I was overwhelmed by sleep.

That was my second "lucid interval." The first in which I was capable of speech, I believe. A week elapsed before I had another.

I knew something of what passed; I distinguished voices; I know that Dr. Fearnwell was often in the room; I was conscious that I had a second nurse. I knew who she was: one of the hospital-nurses, a good, honest, hearty creature, but coarse and rough—a woman never entrusted with the care of delicate cases; but she seemed to act here as servant to Mrs. Rosscar. I knew all these things, but they seemed to concern some other person. When I tried to recognise myself in things, to take hold of anything with distinct self-consciousness, then came those horrible sweats and swoons, and overwhelmed me.

It was a strange wild phase of semi-existence, instructive to a man of my profession to pass through.

For some time after I had got on a good way towards recovery, I talked and thought of myself as "that sick man:" seemed to watch what was done to me, as if it were being done to some other person.

When this phase cleared off, the sense of relief was not unmixed: for I had so laboriously to take myself to myself again—to learn that that sick man's history was

mine, that his memories were mine, his remorse mine, that I often groaned at the labour of it.

"You would never have struggled through, but for the skill and the devotion of your nurse," Dr. Fearnwell said to me.

"So he thinks I have struggled through now," I remarked to Mrs. Rosscar when he was gone. "I must call you something different from 'nurse.'" I went on. "It is impossible that you and that good rough creature should share one title between you."

"I should share no title with any good creature."

"You know it was not that I meant."

"I know it was not that you meant."

"What may I call you?"

"You may call me, if you choose, by my own name, Huldah."

"Huldah!" I repeated. "I wish you had a softer name. It is difficult to say Huldah softly, and——"

"I have known it said softly," she answered. "I have never, since I was a child, been called by that name, except by one person. You may call me by it."

Saying this, she let her eyes, which I had hardly ever, till then, for one moment, been able to meet, rest on mine with a heavy fulness of expression that sent a languid subtle fire through my veins—that, also, made me again afraid: after meeting it, I watched, covertly, for its recurrence.

Mine was a long-protracted uncertain convalescence. I did not set my will towards growing well. I yielded myself up rather to the luxury of my position, yielded myself up, body and soul, as it were. I was under a spell of fascination not devoid of fear. The shock that felled me had come upon me when my whole health of mind and body was at a low ebb. In looking back, I recognise this, though I had not at the time been conscious of it. I had never, since I was a boy, given myself a holiday; never given one hour's indulgence to any passion but that of ambition, till I knew Mrs. Rosscar.

At the time of my meeting her, I had just come to the dregs of my powers, but was not yet conscious of the bitterness of those dregs.

Now, it seemed as if my whole nature—moral, intellectual, physical—voluntarily succumbed. I lay, as I have said, under a spell, and luxuriated in my own powerlessness. As yet it was not the bitter but the sweet dregs of the cup that were passing over my lips.

The weather was hot; boxes of mignonne, some heliotropes, and lemon-scented verbenas, were in my balcony. She watered them of an evening, and let the windows be open and the scent of them float in to me as I lay and watched her at her work.

While this delicious languid luxury of convalescence lasted, and did not pall upon me, why should I wish to get well? While she was there to feed me, I would not raise a hand to feed myself.

The truth was, that my nurse, my perfect nurse, of whom Dr. Fearnwell now and again spoke with an enthusiasm and effusion that would fire my weak brain with sudden jealousy; my nurse, who would, in untiring watchfulness and self-forgetting devotion to her task, have been a perfect nurse for any man who had been indifferent to her, to whom she had been indifferent, was now a most pernicious nurse to me.

I loved her with a desperate sort of passion: a love far more of the senses than the heart.

She was neither an innocent nor an ignorant woman. She knew exactly what to do and what to leave undone. She gave me no chance of growing indifferent through familiarity, if, indeed, with such beauty as hers that could have been possible. As I grew better, though always on duty near me, she was less and less in my room; ever oftener and oftener, when I longed in those cold half-swoonings and icy sweats of weakness, with an almost delirious longing to feel myself soothed and cherished, as on that first season of consciousness, by her close presence, there came to my call, not Mrs. Rossicar, but the other nurse, with her coarse good-tempered face, and her form, from which—reducing, as it did, the sublime to the ridiculous, and the lovely to the loathsome, in its caricaturing exaggeration of all feminine charms—I turned in disgust.

Every day Mrs. Rossicar seemed to me more beautiful. Every day I seemed to feel her beauty more bewilderingly and overpoweringly. Not so much the beauty of her face; it was strange how unfamiliar that remained to me, and how seldom I had a full look into it; whenever it was possible, it was averted from me; her eyes shunned mine, and she kept the room so dim, that I had little chance of studying her expression. If I noticed this, I accounted to myself for it by supposing her to be growing conscious of the burning fever of my passion. Not so much did the beauty

of her face, I say, bind me prisoner. It was the beauty of her presence that so grew upon me: of her whole physical self, as it were. Of her mind and heart I knew nothing. With the music of her movement, the gracious delicacy and harmony of all she did, I was more and more captivated.

The accidents of the sick room, the perfect postures into which her limbs would fall when she slept the sleep of exhaustion, on the couch at the far end of my chamber, made me more and more conscious of the wonderful and rare perfection of proportion of her physical beauty. And yet it was something beyond this that enchained me.

Has the body a soul apart from the soul's soul?

Is there a soul of physical beauty?

But what I mean, escapes me as I struggle to express it.

In my strange passion for her, there was always something of fear.

Sometimes, in the night, I would lie awake, leaning on my elbow, and watch her sleep, and follow the rising and the falling of the now childless breast. At those times I always thought about the child, and wondered how she thought and how she suffered, and I wondered with a great awe. Was her heart dead? About all her soft gentleness there was no touch of tenderness. Did she nurse me mechanically, not caring whether it was I or another? Then recurred to me the first words I had heard her speak when I revived to consciousness: "That he may not die, great God, that he may not die!"

Remembering these first words of hers, I could hardly think her tendance mechanical or indifferent. Was she grateful to me, knowing I would have saved and healed her child? Then returned to me the scene by the small bed—the awful eyes, the uplifted arms. Often, at this point of my thinking, I would cry aloud to find myself bathed in that terrible cold sweat, and my cry would wake her, and her approach would then fill me with dread.

For a long time, things went on without change. I got neither worse nor better. Dr. Fearnwell grew impatient.

"Your heart continues strangely weak and irritable," he said one day; saying it, he looked—I believe it was a pure accident—from me to Mrs. Rossicar, and back to me. The sudden rush of heat to my face, then, possibly, suggested something to him; for he considered me gravely, and

Mrs. Rossicar judiciously. I wished, how I wished, that, for the time of the good doctor's eyes being on her, she could have looked ugly!

"We must try change," he said. "It will not do to go on like this; we must try change. You are a man with work to do in the world; you must be braced up to do it. The air of the town, and especially of your room, is enervating in this warm weather."

"I am far too weak to go out," I said. "It would kill me to move."

He paid no attention to that; he was reflecting.

"To-morrow," he went on, "I will call for you, in the afternoon; you can quite well bear a short journey in my carriage. I will take you to a farm-house in the country, pretty high up among the hills. There, you will soon get strong and well. You will be yourself again before the cold weather comes."

"I shall die of weariness," I answered, peevishly.

"Nothing of the kind; you will grow calm and strong."

"I can't possibly do without a great deal of nursing yet."

"The good woman of the farm is a kind motherly creature; she will do all that is necessary—she and one of her cows, from which you must take plenty of new milk."

At that moment I hated Dr. Fearnwell. I do not know what answer I might not have made him, but Mrs. Rossicar spoke, and my attention was immediately arrested.

"I am very glad you proposed this change, Dr. Fearnwell," she said. "It relieves me of a difficulty. I am unable to remain here longer. I have had news from my own neighbourhood that calls me south. Nurse Wilkins is hardly competent to undertake the sole charge of my patient in his present stage of convalescence; but the farmer's wife and the cow, between them"—she smiled, one of her very rare and very brief smiles—"will get me over my difficulty."

"We are to lose you? You are unable to remain here longer?" Dr. Fearnwell said.

He paid me a long visit that day, but very little of his attention was given to me; he seemed to be studying Mrs. Rossicar with roused interest.

"She is too beautiful and too young for the vocation she has chosen," he said, by-and-by, when she had, for a few moments, left the room. "Besides that, she is a woman with a preoccupied mind, with a memory, or a purpose."

His last words made me shudder, but I returned him some sulky dissenting answer. That this woman was the mother of the poor little child on whom we had operated, he did not know, or suspect.

"My poor fellow, I see you're in a devil of a temper. But I don't care; what I'm doing is for your good—if only I have done it soon enough."

"Oh! People are so very brave, always, in their operations for other people's good," I remarked, still as sulky as a bear, and yet troubled by the sound of my own words. I was mad enough to believe that Dr. Fearnwell was himself in love with my nurse, and jealous of me!

"You'll live to thank me for what I'm doing, or to reproach me for not having done it sooner," he said, and then took leave of me.

Mrs. Rossicar returned to the room, finding me, of course, in the deepest dejection and sullenness. She looked at me, as she entered, with some curiosity or interest. It was very rarely that she spoke, except in reply; very rarely that she approached me, except when some service made it needful she should do so. To-day, she spoke first, coming to my side, within reach of my hand, but averting her face from me. She took up her work, and then said:

"So it is settled? You go into the country to-morrow?"

"I don't know that it is at all settled. I am not an idiot, or a baby, that I should do exactly what I'm told. I am well enough now, to have a will of my own. Probably, when he calls for me, I shall say, 'I will not go!'"

"Do not say that," she returned, earnestly. "Go, I advise you. It is true that I cannot stay here longer."

"It is true that here, or there, or anywhere, I cannot live without you," I said, in a passionate outburst.

"I own that you are not yet well enough to go without your accustomed nurse," she answered, "and your nurse does not like to have an incomplete case taken out of her hands. But, after the way in which Dr. Fearnwell spoke to-day, after the insinuations contained in his look to-day, I could no longer nurse you *here*, where I am always liable to be seen by him."

"Do you mean——" I began, with a great throbbing joy.

"I mean that if you go with the doctor to-morrow, you may find that your nurse will soon join you, if——"

"I will promise anything," I cried, grasping her hand.

"If you will be controlled and prudent, and will not again expose me to the doctor's remarks."

"I will do, or not do, anything you tell me to do, or not to do."

"Have you a sister?"

"No."

"Does Dr. Fearnwell know you have no sister?"

"He knows nothing of me, except as a student."

"Tell him to-morrow, then, and tell the people at the farm, that your sister is coming to join you. Dr. Fearnwell won't come out often: when he does, it will be easy to devise some reason for his not seeing 'your sister.'"

She stopped the outburst of my gratitude by rising to leave the room. Not only by this, but by the look she gave me—a dark, inscrutable, terrible look—pondering over which I grew cold.

Next day, she asked Dr. Fearnwell, when he came to fetch me, how to address to me at the farm, giving no reason for her question, which, indeed, required none. It was natural that she should wish to write to the patient to whom she had for two months devoted herself unwearingly.

In late August and early September, the Haunted Holly Farm, under the edge of the Grey Moor, was a delicious place. Dr. Fearnwell, who had, no doubt, chosen it for its austere severity of situation, and the absence of all softness and luxuriance in its surroundings, had no knowledge of the old walled south-sloping garden, lying at some distance from the house, where, because of the bleakness of the spot, all flowers blossomed late: Midsummer blossoms postponing themselves often till August; and where, because of the good soil and the pure air, they blossomed profusely. Nor did he take note of the one great meadow, now grey for the scythe, into which the flagged path, rose-bordered, of this garden opened through a grand old gate, with carved pillars and sculptured urns, and, on each side, an ancient lime-tree, the sole remnants of a glorious old avenue. The farm had been one of the dependencies of a great mansion.

On the second afternoon after I had come to the farm—for more than four-and-twenty hours she had let me know what it was to be without her—Mrs. Ross-car, 'my sister,' sat with me in the old garden, a profuse wilderness of roses and of honeysuckles; and in the meadow before us the hay was down, and the air full of its fragrance. She let me hold her hand in mine, she let

me press close to her with a passionate desire to satisfy the hunger for her presence, created by her absence.

"God bless Dr. Fearnwell!" I cried. "To be ill in that dingy room in Strath-cairn-street was exquisite beyond anything I have known, while you nursed me; but to grow well in this enchanting place, where the air feels like the elixir of life, with you always beside me——!"

She smiled, a smile of which I saw the beginning only; for she turned her head aside. Then she sighed, and said, softly:

"And when you are well? When you have no longer any excuse for claiming 'nurse' or 'sister'?"

There was in her voice, as she said this, for the first time, a slight tremulousness.

"Then," I cried, passionately; the air, the beauty of the place, her beauty, completely intoxicating me; "I shall claim a wife. I can never again do without you. You must marry me!"

Her hand moved in mine, but not with any effort to withdraw itself. She turned her face still further aside, but through the muslin that covered her bosom—she had in these days discarded her close black dresses, though wearing always mourning—I saw that the warm blood rushed across her snowy neck and throat.

By that emboldened, I pressed her for an answer, for a promise of her love. She turned on me.

"That I should love you!" she said. "Is it credible?"

She rose and left me. I sat where she had left me, pondering what might be the meaning of those words, of the voice in which they were spoken, of the look that accompanied them. The voice had none of the music of her voice; the look was incomprehensible; I could read in it, it seemed to me, anything rather than love. And yet I confidently, audaciously, believed that she loved me, but that she struggled against her love.

What motive could she have, but love, for devoting herself to me thus? Why risk good name and fame, which to so proud a woman as I thought her, could hardly be indifferent. What could I conclude but that she loved me? And yet with what a strange fashion of love—so cold, so passive, so irresponsible! With so slight a difference, if with any difference, one might so easily express disgust.

I must have sat a long time where she had left me; for when a hand was laid on my shoulder, and a voice said, near my ear: "My patient, you must come in, the

dew begins to fall," looking up, I found that the sunset was burning in the west, and that the stars were beginning to show.

Somehow, the way that hand touched my shoulder, and the slight accentuation on that word "my," made me shudder. She was like Fate claiming a victim. It was only the chill of the evening that sent such a thought through me. Indoors, by-and-by, when the curtains were drawn and the logs blazed on the open hearth, and she made my tea and brought it to me, and tended me with all watchful observance, I entered again into my fool's paradise.

And so, again, next day, as, through the hot drowsy afternoon hours, she sat, and I lay beside her, on the warm hay, under the shadow of the still fragrant boughs of one of those late-blossoming limes. My head was in her lap, and my cheek was pressed against the blue-veined inner side of that warm white arm.

Beyond this meadow, stretched wave after wave of yellow corn, all in a shimmer and glimmer of heat, running down the hill, overflowing the plain, seeming, from where we were, to wash up to the very feet of the castle-dominated romantic old city.

With eyes growing more dreamy and more drowsy every moment, I watched the glisten and sheen till I fell asleep. I fancy I slept some time. I awoke suddenly and with a sense of alarm. I had had a strange and dreadful dream; words of deadly hate had been hissed into my ear by a serpent, and its cold coil had been wound round my throat.

My hand went quickly to my throat when I awoke, and there lay across it—nothing dreadful—only a heavy tress of Mrs. Rosscar's hair, which, slipping loose, had uncoiled itself as she bent over me.

I looked up into her eyes with the horror of my dream still on me. Did I expect to find love shed down on me from them? They held mine a moment; they were full of darkness, but, as I looked up something softened the darkness. She smiled; in her smile there was some pity.

"I was half afraid to let you sleep," she said, "but on such an afternoon, I thought there could be no danger."

"Danger! What danger?"

"Of your taking cold. What other danger could there be? You look as if you had been dreaming painfully, my poor boy."

She had never so addressed me before.

"I have been dreaming horribly," I said.

"Lying on your lap, on such a day, in such a place, how could that be possible!"

She would not meet my eyes.

"I am not at all sure I have not taken cold," I said, with a shudder, half real and half assumed.

"You must come in at once, and take some hot drink. Come."

We both rose and walked to the house. I leaned on her arm: not that I now needed its support, but I liked to feel the soft warm arm under my hand, and I liked to remind her of my dependence upon her.

I often wondered, and with uneasy wonder, that she never spoke of her child never, so far as I knew, wept for it. But she was a strangely silent woman. As I have said, she very rarely spoke first, or as it were, voluntarily; and when she responded to what was said to her, it was always as briefly as possible. It seemed as if she understood how expressive was every movement of her gracious form, how needless for her, compared with other beings, was speech, even of the eyes, far more of the lips. Anything approaching to liveliness of movement, or of voice, would have been out of harmony with her being. She was more fit to be set on a costly pedestal and gazed at, than to move in the common ways of this common world, thought. And each unconscious pose of her was so completely beautiful that I always thought until I noted the next—"that is how I would have you stand, that I might gaze on you for ever!"

Though I believed she loved me, I was not satisfied. I remembered her as she had been upon the river that day, and I felt that she was changed. I remembered the smiles she had shed upon her child. I only she would smile so, once, at me—but she never did. Once, I had implored her for a full eye to eye look, and for a smile. Then, she had turned her face to mine; but fixed her eyes on mine; but the dark quiet eyes were inscrutable. Suddenly, just as I believed I was going to read them, she covered them with her hands, and turned her head away.

One evening, as we sat together in the warm twilight by the hearth, I tried to break down the silence between us about the child.

"Huldah!" I said, "you have not told me where your little child is lying. Let us go together to the grave. Let me weep there with you—let—" I stopped suddenly, with a cold damp on my brow, as I remembered the awful eyes, the arm raised, and the lips moving to curse me, of this very woman by whom I sat. I felt a slight convulsion of the frame round

which I had drawn my arm; but when she spoke it was in the quietest voice:

"We will go there together; but not yet."

"When?"

"When you are stronger; when I am your wife."

"And you will let that be soon?"

"Yes, it must be soon."

It seemed to me her heart was beating very heavily. I told her so.

"It is full," she said, drawing a deep breath. "It is over-full."

"Of what?"

"Cannot you guess?" She leaned her face close down to mine, too close for me to be able to read it. "It is strange if you cannot guess," she added.

"If only I dared to read it by my own," I said.

"Dare to read it by your own," she answered.

"My heart is heavy and over-full with love of you, Huldah."

"And must not mine be heavy and full with love of you? Of you so generous that you are willing to make of an unknown woman your wife: to give her your name, not asking her right to the name she bears, or to any name."

She spoke more quickly than I had ever heard her speak: still with her face so close to mine that I could not read it.

"Generous? I generous in being ready to give for that without which everything else is worthless, all that is only any worth through that."

"That is it!" she said, with something approaching to eagerness (so answering, I thought afterwards, some inward scruple).

"It is to yourself you are ready to sacrifice yourself: not to me. Suppose I tell you I have no right to the name you call me by, or to any name; that though a mother, I have never been a wife; that I shame your name if I take it; that——"

"You can shame nothing; you and shame are not to be named together. I want to know nothing of your past. What you are, is enough for me, and what you will be——my wife!"

She answered me never a word. She suffered my caresses as she suffered my other forms of speech. Not one slightest hand-pressure, even of a finger.

My wooing of her, was like the wooing of a statue, if only a statue could have been exquisitely warm and soft and, by contact, could have thrilled one with intensest life.

A day was fixed for our marriage. The time went on. I cannot say that it lingered, or that it flew; it was, to me, a

time of intoxication—not quite untroubled by occasional pangs, and pauses of sobriety, for sometimes in those deep dark eyes of hers I surprised expressions that troubled me—sometimes looks of pity—sometimes darker looks than I could understand.

At last there came an evening when, as we parted for the night, I said: "After this night, only one night more, and then a day after which nothing but Death shall part us!"

An hour afterwards, not being able to sleep, I came back into the sitting-room for a book. She was sitting before the embers, which threw a lurid light upon her face, and upon her hands clasped round her knees.

She was so far absorbed that she did not hear the approach of my slippered feet across the floor.

I spoke to her, throwing myself at her feet. I poured out a passion of foolish eloquence. To my wonder, to my horror, to my fear, to my delight, she burst into a terrible storm of weeping.

I tried to soothe her as a lover might; but she rose, withdrew herself, and leaned against the oaken chimney-piece until the storm subsided.

I pressed to know the cause of this, grasping her hands to detain her.

"I find I am not a fiend, not an avenging spirit, only a woman—a weak, miserable, wretched woman." She would tell me no more; she rid herself of my grasp, as if my hands had had no more strength in them than an infant's. "To-morrow," she said, "by my child's grave, I will tell you more." So, she left me; to be all that night sleepless, and haunted by her perplexing words.

Soon after breakfast we set out, through the soft grey autumn morning, for the child's grave.

I had not known, until now, where the little creature was buried.

It was not a short walk; chiefly across the moors till the close of it, when we dropped down suddenly, into a little jewel of a green dell, where was the smallest of churches, overshadowed by the biggest of yew-trees.

Through all the walk she had hardly spoken. The few times I spoke to her, she did not seem to hear me. Perhaps she had never, since the loss of her child, looked so softly beautiful. I had never felt myself held further aloof from her, had never been more afraid of her. I followed her through the churchyard gate to the little grave.

"She lies here."

The turf on that small grave had not yet drunk deep enough of the autumn rains, to look fresh and green.

"It has had no tears shed on it. It is dry and scorched, like my heart, like my heart!"

She stood motionless and speechless for a time that seemed to me immense; her drooped eyes seemed to be looking into the earth. Presently she sank upon her knees, then dropped upon the grave, pressing her breast against it, and laying on it, first one cheek and then the other. By-and-by, she rose again to her knees. When she spoke it was brokenly, piteously.

"I cannot do it, I cannot do it! The mother in me will not let me. My child will not let me. You were once kind to her. You made her happy for one bright blessed day. Bertram, poor boy! I had thought to do it, when I was your wife. But here, on my child's grave, I recal the curse I invoked upon you by her death-bed. I am only a weak miserable woman, not even able to hate or to curse! Everything, even revenge, is lost to me with what lies here!"

She threw herself down again upon the grave in utter abandonment of grief; and I, leaning against the yew-tree, watched her, weeping there. I have not much consciousness of what transacted itself in my brain, meanwhile. I think I realised nothing clearly. I fancy I had a feeling of saying to myself, "I told you so"—as if something I had been expecting long, had happened at last. A soft drizzling rain that blotted out the distance, and blurred the landscape, began to fall. Of this she, lying always with her face pressed down upon the turf, was not aware, though I saw her shawl grow sodden under it. I remember well the words with which I recalled her to herself. They showed the blankness of my brain and how little I comprehended the situation; yet, even as I spoke them, I was smitten by their imbecility.

"It is raining," I said. "I am cold and wet. It drips through this shelter. I shall be ill again. Let us go home."

I was tired, benumbed, mind and body. I stumbled and walked vaguely. She made me lean on her arm, and led me

home. Even more silently than we had come, we went.

I was trying to believe all the way, that I believed that to-morrow everything would be as it was to have been, in spite of this episode, and in spite of my sense of my utter powerlessness under my bondage to her. When we reached the house she was tenderly careful of me.

That evening she told me her history, and what had been her proposed revenge. She had designed to make me love her madly. That she had done. She had designed to let me marry her, who had been a mother and not a wife. She had designed, as the wife of my infatuated love and unspeakable passion, to have cursed me as her child's butcher, at her child's grave. She had designed—or was the nameless dread and horror of my illness taking this terrific form in its flight?—when she had thus slowly ground down my heart to its last grain of misery and grief, to murder me in my bed.

"I could have married you for hate," she said; "but for such love as has arisen in my soul for you—if indeed it is love, or anything but compassion and kindness towards the poor wretch I have helped back to life—never!"

She left the farm that night. I never saw her again.

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VERONICA.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE."
IN FIVE BOOKS.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER VIII. CONVALESCENT.

"PAUL!" cried a harsh, querulous voice from behind the curtains of the bed in the guest-chamber at Shipley vicarage. "Paul! Where the devil——"

Then followed a string of oaths in English, French, and Italian; not pretty rose-water expletives, such as are occasionally attributed in the pages of fashionable novels to irresistible young guardsmen and such-like curled darlings of the world. There was no odour of rose-water about these oaths. They were vile, fierce, blasphemous phrases, borrowed from the vocabulary of the ignorant and degraded.

Sir John Gale was the speaker. Sir John Gale was impatient and angry. When that was the case, Sir John Gale was apt to express himself in the strongest, coarsest, most ferocious language with which his tongue was acquainted.

Presently the door opened, and Paul came into the room. Paolo Paoli was a Piedmontese. He was a short, thick, ugly, middle-aged man, with grave, light-coloured eyes, set under overhanging brows. He had a shock of grizzled hair, and a broad forehead, and his face was clean shaven.

Paul had been a courier, and in this capacity had attracted the attention, and won the favourable opinion, of Sir John Gale. The latter had elevated Paul to the post of confidential and personal attendant on himself. A "confidential" attendant might seem at first sight to be of small value to Sir John, considering that he never voluntarily made a confidence to any

human being. But there are involuntary confidences which we all make daily and hourly respecting ourselves. The recipient of these in Sir John's case needed to be staunch, patient, and discreet. Paul was all three.

He entered the chamber, bearing in his hand a tray covered with a napkin, on which was placed a small basin of soup.

His master saluted him with a volley of abuse for having delayed.

Paul very gravely set down the tray, raised his master in the bed, supported his back with pillows, threw a dressing-gown over his shoulders, and then, pulling from his waistcoat-pocket a large silver watch attached to a black ribbon, said, "It is time for your soup, sir."

Sir John tasted the soup, made a grimace of disgust, and launched another volley of oaths at Paul.

"This is uneatable—beastly! They have put sage, or some damned thing into it. Ugh!"

"Very good soup, sir," replied Paul, imperturbably. "No sage. I saw it made. You eat it warm, sir. It will give strength. Very good soup."

The convalescent continued to grumble at every spoonful; but he swallowed the savoury, nourishing broth to the last drop. And then Paul removed the tray, mended the fire, and proceeded to lay out his master's clothes; for the invalid was to leave his room to-day, for the first time since his accident.

Sir John looked upward from among his pillows to where the window gave a glimpse of pale blue March sky, fretted by the skeleton branches of the yet bare trees.

"It's a fine day, eh?" he asked.

"Yes, sir. Cold. You must be well wrapped, sir."

"What sort of place is the sitting-room?"

Paul described, as well as he could, the apartment which he called the *salon*, and with the aspect of which the reader is already acquainted. He further stated that there was a comfortable arm-chair at Sir John's disposal; that a screen and a curtain had been arranged behind this chair so as to exclude all draughts; and that a footstool had been placed in front of it.

"How devilish weak I am!" exclaimed Sir John, with an almost piteous expression of face, as he essayed, with his servant's assistance, to dress himself.

This was not the first time that he had left his bed. He had been wrapped in a dressing-gown, and seated in an easy chair by the fireside in his own chamber, on several previous occasions. But now he was to venture into the sitting-room, have tea with the vicar's family, and make the acquaintance of the young ladies.

On the part of these latter, there was a good deal of curiosity respecting their guest. The two girls did not even know with any accuracy what his personal appearance might be. True, they had seen him—if it could be called seeing—when he was swooning, bleeding, mud-spattered, on the ground at their gate. But who could judge of a gentleman's looks under such circumstances?

When Sir John Gale stood for a moment at the open door of the parlour leaning on Paul's arm, and looking his first look at the vicar's daughter and ward, this is what their eyes beheld: a man of middle height, slenderly made and somewhat high shouldered, dressed with scrupulous neatness—even with elegance—and bearing traces in his face and his attitude of recent severe illness.

How much of the worn aspect of his face, and the unwholesomeness of the skin—which looked as though it should naturally have been ruddy and plumply filled out, but which now hung white and flaccid over the cheeks, and in baggy wrinkles beneath the prominent dark eyes—how much of the sickly whiteness of the bony hands, white as a woman's, but knotted and ploughed with deep lines like those of a very aged man—how much, in brief, of the general debility, and air of being used-up, now perceptible in Sir John's aspect, was due to recent suffering, and how much of all this had belonged to it for years past, the vicar's family could not tell. They accepted his appearance as being the natural appearance of a man no longer young, who

had just arisen from a bed of sickness where his mind and body had both been severely tried.

He had sandy hair, slightly grizzled, carefully brushed, and so disposed as to hide, as far as possible, a bald patch on the crown of the head. He wore a pointed beard, and moustaches that curved fiercely upward. His nose was well shaped, although rather sharp and beak-like. The tell-tale mouth was partly concealed by the fringe of moustache. Altogether he might have been pronounced a handsome man; and he was pronounced to be so by many persons.

In the sitting-room awaiting him were Mr. Levincourt with Maud and Veronica. The latter wore a winter dress of rich claret colour, relieved at the throat and wrists by ruffles of white lace—very fine old lace that had belonged to her mother, and that was, in truth, a little out of place on her plain stuff gown.

Maud was an inch or two shorter than her companion; she had broad, finely moulded shoulders, and a noble white throat supporting a head whose form and proportions were almost perfect. Her features were irregular, and not one of them could be called handsome, save the almond-shaped blue eyes set rather deeply under broad brows. Her wide mobile mouth was not beautiful, though its sweetness, when she spoke or smiled, was irresistible. But, one beauty Maud Desmond possessed which appealed to the least cultivated appreciation: this was her hair, which was of a rare golden hue. When the sunlight fell on it, it shone as though each separate hair had been drawn out of burnished metal, and it was softer to the touch than silk.

On these two girls, and on their surroundings, looked, for the first time, Sir John Gale.

The vicar hastened forward to offer his guest the support of his arm, which the latter gentleman accepted after a moment's hesitation.

"I am ashamed," said Sir John, with a frank smile, which showed a bright range of false teeth, "ashamed and sorry to be such a bore and a nuisance. But the truth is, I had no idea, until I began to dress just now, how entirely my strength was prostrated. It seems absurd, but I am absolutely as weak as a baby."

"We are truly rejoiced, most truly so, to welcome you among us. Your strength will come back, undoubtedly. It is now

only a question of time. Have patience yet awhile. My daughter, Sir John Gale. My ward, Miss Desmond. Paul, be so good as to wheel your master's chair a little more this way."

The baronet took the hand which Veronica had half offered, half withheld, and bowed low.

Maud saluted him by a smile and a bend of the head, which he returned by a still lower bow than the first.

"I trust," said Sir John, when he was seated, "that Mr. Levincourt has been so very kind as to explain to you how impossible I find it to express in any adequate way my sense of your great goodness and hospitality."

His glance, as he spoke, included the two young ladies.

"We are very glad to see you so much better," said Maud.

"And the truth is, we have done nothing at all for you, Sir John; Paul would not let us," added Veronica.

"That man of yours is an excellent fellow," said the vicar, when Paul had left the room. "There are no such servants to be had in England now-a-days. Veronica, give Sir John some tea, and then ring for another large cup for me. I cannot be persuaded to drink my tea out of a thing no bigger than an egg-shell," he added, turning to his guest.

"Not to mention, papa, that these tiny tea-cups are quite old-fashioned now!" exclaimed Veronica, with a bright, saucy smile, which became her infinitely.

"Are they? How do you know? We live here, Sir John, in the most countrified of country parsonages, and yet——. But, upon my honour, I believe that if you were to stick a woman on the top of the column of St. Simeon Stylites, she would nevertheless contrive in some mysterious way to know what was 'in fashion' and what wasn't."

"Perhaps it is a sixth sense implanted in us by nature, Uncle Charles," said Maud, demurely. "You know the inferior animals *have* these mysterious instincts."

Sir John's eyes had hitherto been contemplating the glossy coils of Veronica's ebon hair, as she bent her head over the tea equipage. Now, he turned and regarded Maud more attentively than he yet had done.

"I beg pardon," said he to the vicar. "I thought that when you did me the honour to present me to Miss—Miss Dermott—you called her your ward?"

"Yes; and so I am," answered Maud, taking no notice of the mispronunciation of her name. "I have no right whatever to call Mr. Levincourt 'Uncle Charles,' Sir John. But I have been let to do so ever since I came here as a very small child. I began by calling him 'Zio,' as Mrs. Levincourt taught me, in Italian fashion. But very soon my British tongue translated the appellation, and my guardian has been 'Uncle Charles' ever since."

Sir John did not appear profoundly interested in this explanation, although he listened with polite attention while Maud spoke.

Presently he and the vicar began discoursing of foreign travel and foreign places, and the girls listened almost in silence.

"Ah!" sighed the vicar, plaintively. "Bel cielo d'Italia! I know not what price I would not pay for another glimpse of that intense living blue, after the fogs and clouds of Daneshire."

Mr. Levincourt had succeeded in persuading himself that the three years he had spent abroad had been years of unmixed enjoyment.

"I tell you what it is, Mr. Levincourt," said Sir John, passing his bony white hand over his moustache; "Italy is not the pleasant residence for foreigners that it must have been when you first knew it. What with their unionism, and constitutionalism, and liberalism, they've sent the whole thing to the ——; they've spoilt the society altogether," concluded the baronet, discreetly changing the form of his phrase.

"Really?"

"Well, in fifty ways, things are altered for the worse, even in my experience of Italy, which dates now, at intervals, some twelve or fourteen years back. For one thing, that British Moloch, Mrs. Grundy, has begun to be set up there."

Veronica raised her eyes and uttered a little exclamation expressive of disgust.

"I should not think that mattered very much," said Maud, half aloud.

Sir John caught the impulsively-uttered words, and replied at once. "Not matter? Ah, Jeunesse! I assure you, my dear young lady, that it matters a great deal. Mrs. Grundy is a very terrible and hideous old idol indeed. She can bully you, and worry you, and rap you on the head with her twopenny wooden staff."

Maud coloured high at being thus addressed, but she answered bravely. "Still I cannot see that she has power to hurt good people. I thought it was only the

professional pickpocket who objected to seeing a constable at every street corner!"

Sir John Gale's studied good breeding partook less of the nature of polish—which beautifies and displays the natural grain of the wood—than of veneer. The veneer, though not unskilfully applied, occasionally cracked, revealing glimpses of a rather coarse and ugly material beneath it. He had especially an egotistical proneness to attribute chance allusions to himself.

"Really!" he exclaimed. "I am to conclude that you suppose that I dislike Mrs. Grundy because I fear her? She is the policeman at the street corner, and your humble servant is the professional pickpocket?"

Maud looked painfully shocked. The colour receded from her face, and then flushed back brighter than ever as she said, "Oh, Sir John! How could you suppose—? I—I beg your pardon. I had no intention or idea of any such meaning."

But Sir John had already begun a discussion with the vicar as to the comparative merits of Tuscan and Neapolitan wines, and seemed to have dismissed Maud's unlucky speech from his mind.

The rest of the evening passed pleasantly, until the early hour at which it was deemed well for the invalid to retire.

The vicar was delighted with his guest. Mr. Levincourt declared that he felt like some shipwrecked mariner who had passed years in a savage island, and to whose door the winds and the waves had drifted a stranger from the distant lands of civilisation.

"It would be more civil, papa, if you had said that we were *three* shipwrecked mariners. A kind of Swiss Family Robinson," observed Veronica, laughing.

The exaggeration of all this grated on Maud's common sense. But she repressed the protest which trembled on her lips.

"Maudie looks sagely disapproving," said Veronica, glancing at her.

"I am disapproving myself," replied Maud. "How pert and flippant Sir John must have thought me! My impulsive speeches are always getting me into trouble."

"O! I do not believe that Sir John will give the matter another thought. But if it weighs on your conscience you can explain, the next time you see him, that——"

"Ah, no: there are some things that cannot be explained—to Sir John Gale."

"Why not to him? He is not stupid."

"No, he is not stupid, but—— He is

like some richly embroidered stuff I once saw: very gorgeous and magnificent at a distance, but a little coarse in the grain, and not to be touched with impunity by a sensitive skin."

"H'm! You little shy, proud, *English* owl!" exclaimed Veronica.

And then for a full half hour she remained staring silently into the fire, until her satin cheeks were quite scorched and crimson.

The next day was the nineteenth, and the two girls were in a state of agreeable excitement at the prospect of the dinner party which awaited them.

The kitchen was pervaded by a smell of ironing. Joanna was smoothing out dainty little tuckers, and a long white muslin skirt over which Veronica's gold-coloured sash was presently to stream gracefully. Early in the afternoon, a wooden box arrived by a special messenger from Danecester, and was found to contain two bouquets carefully wrapped in cotton wool.

Sir John Gale—who had not yet left his room at that early hour—sent Paul into the vicar's study with a little note, in which Sir John begged that the young ladies would do him the honour to wear a few flowers that he had taken the liberty of procuring for them.

"A few flowers!" cried Veronica, with sparkling eyes. "They are exquisite. They come from Covent Garden. There's the man's name in the box. Look at these white moss-roses, and the Cape jasmine! Your bouquet is mixed, Maudie; mine is all white. How perfect! Do look pleased, little icicle!"

"I am pleased," said Maud, with a certain constraint. "And very, very, much obliged."

Veronica carried the superb exotics into the kitchen, and exhibited them with transport to the servants. The young lady had a genuine passion for applause and admiration. She could not be entirely happy without an audience to witness her happiness. It had been the same from her baby days. When, as quite little girls, they had owned a shaggy pony which was supposed to be the joint property of the two children, Maud had heartily enjoyed trotting out into the wildest bits of country she could find; but Veronica's delight had been to find an excuse for riding through the village, or even, if that might be, into Shipley Magna. And her chubby cheeks would glow, and her eyes would brighten, when she heard passers-by exclaiming that that

was the vicar's little lass; and hadn't she a pair of eyes? And didn't she look like a fairy, flying along with her black curls streaming over her shoulders? So now, when she had the costly flowers in her hand, she could not resist displaying them to the servants; and she took a creamy spotless camellia from the outside of her own bouquet and laid it amongst the rich waves of her hair, and stood with a beaming face to be admired.

Catherine was in ecstasies, and declared, when her young mistress had gone away again, that she liked Miss Veronica, that she did, for she had such pleasant good-natured ways with her.

But old Joanna smiled shrewdly, and observed that the lass was the very moral of her poor mother in some things; and that a bit of show-off was the breath of her nostrils. "Not but what," added Joanna, "Miss Veronica has more sense in her little finger than the poor missis had in all her body. And a will she has—has the lass—that's as stout as steel! A will for anything she fancies, I mean: she can't be stubborn and strong about doing things as is only her duty. But if there's summat as she wants for her own good pleasure, you'll see she'll get it. It was the same wi' her since she could toddle, poor lass! Many a forbidden fruit she's aten, an' many a stomach-ache she's had for her pains!"

CHAPTER IX. THE DINNER AT LOWATER.

VERY jolly Captain Sheardown looked, and very radiant his wife, as they welcomed the party from the vicarage into their warm, well-lighted drawing-room.

"Your reverence has had a cold drive," said Captain Sheardown, jocularly. And then he and the vicar, and Mr. Snowe—who, with his son, Herbert, had arrived not many minutes previously—stood on the hearth-rug and talked of the weather, and the hunting, and the Colenso controversy, or whatsoever topic was then chiefly arousing the attention of the British public. Mrs. Sheardown, meanwhile, welcomed the girls, and installed them in comfortable arm-chairs, one on either side of her. Nelly Sheardown was about thirty-five years old. She had not been married more than eight years, for she and the captain had been constant to each other through a long engagement; and Tom Sheardown's head was grey before he could declare that his fight with fortune was fought out, and could claim Nelly Cherbrook for his wife. He was twenty years her senior; and there

appeared to be even more difference between their ages. For, Mrs. Sheardown looked younger now than she had done before her marriage, during the weary years of waiting that had sickened the heart with hope deferred, and graven lines in the face.

"How is your guest?" asked Mrs. Sheardown of Veronica.

"Sir John is getting much better: nearly well, thank you. It is such a comfort for papa to feel assured that all danger is over. It was a great responsibility, you know, having a total stranger in the house in that state;" thus, Veronica.

"None of his relations came to see him?"

"He has lived abroad, and has no family ties in England, Mrs. Sheardown."

"Poor old man! It is a lonely position for him."

Veronica gave a rapid glance at her hostess's honest face, and then buried her own amongst her flowers.

Maud laughed heartily. "Dear Mrs. Sheardown," she said, "do you know I have a notion that Sir John Gale does not by any means look upon himself in that light."

"In what light?"

"As a 'lonely old man.'"

"Oh! I thought—I didn't know——"

"Lady Alicia Renwick," cried Captain Sheardown's old servant, throwing open the door. And the hostess rose and went to welcome the new arrival.

Lady Alicia Renwick was the daughter of a Scotch peer, and the widow of a gentleman who had made a large fortune in some ironworks. Still further to the south than Danecester, was a great black district whose horizon glared at night with a hundred lurid fires. And there the deceased Mr. Renwick had owned strange-looking brick structures, like pyramids with the angles rounded off, and with smoke and flame issuing from their summits. Lady Alicia did not inherit all the gold that was melted out of the iron-ore in these grimy crucibles. Mr. Renwick had a numerous family by a former wife, and had provided for them all, handsomely. But his relict enjoyed an income which would have appeared princely in her maiden eyes, and which she now characterised as "genteel starvation." For there is nothing we become more easily accustomed to, than the possession of riches. And a genuine love of money is one of the few passions that age, with its hollow voice crying "All is vanity!" has no power to weaken.

Lady Alicia was a tall, handsome, stiff old lady, who took a gloomy view of life, and who had a good deal of wit of a dry, bitter, biting flavour.

Her ladyship's entrance into the room was closely followed by that of a gentleman. Captain Sheardown, after having greeted Lady Alicia, called to him.

"Come here, Hugh. I want to introduce you to the vicar of Shipley. Mr. Levin-court, this is my young friend Hugh Lockwood. You may have heard me speak of his father."

"Who is the gentleman?" asked Lady Alicia, half aside, of Mrs. Sheardown, and looking across the room as she spoke, with a not unfavourable glance.

"Mr. Hugh Lockwood, Lady Alicia. You may remember, perhaps, that his father was a great protégé of the old Admiral many, many years ago, that is, before I ever saw my husband."

"Oh, aye, to be sure! I recollect it all very well now. Robert Lockwood was a Daneshire man born and bred. He came of humble folks, small tradespeople in Shipley Magna, but he had an aspiring soul, and he got it into his head that he was born to be a great painter. Admiral Sheardown had a taste for the arts, and helped the lad to an education. And that is his son, eh? Not bad looking!"

Mrs. Sheardown explained in a few words that Hugh's father had done credit to his patron's discrimination, and had attained a good position amongst British artists. Robert Lockwood had died some years ago. His son was articled pupil to an architect in London: and having had occasion to visit Danecester on professional business, Captain Sheardown had invited the young man to stay for a few days at Lowater House.

Presently arrived Dr. Begbie, rector of Hammick, with his wife and daughter, and Miss Boyce: a lady who was staying at the rectory on a visit; and these completed the number of invited guests.

Betsy Boyce, as her friends and acquaintances called her, was a simpering, lively old lady who prided herself on her thorough knowledge of "society." She lived in London when she did not happen to be visiting at some country house. But her residence in the metropolis was never protracted; and her address when there, was not revealed to many persons. She called cousins with half the names in the Peerage: and indeed Miss Boyce found a phrase or two out of that august

volume act as an "open sesame" to many a comfortable home where bed and board were at her service for as long as she chose to remain. She was herself perfectly good-humoured and humble minded; and despite her eccentricities she was liked and esteemed by those people who knew her best. But she had taken up the Peerage as a kind of profession, just as some reverend Mussulman divine adopts the Koran. She lived by its aid very comfortably; whereas Miss Elizabeth Sophia Augusta Boyce, with very few pounds per annum to call her own, and without any aristocratic connexions, would have found it a rather hard task to make both ends meet. "Besides, my dear," she would say confidentially to some intimate friend, "I don't really humbug anybody. Papa and mamma were both thoroughly well connected. It never did them any good that I know of; but you see it is a great mercy for me. If it were not for my family and my knowledge of who's who, I might mope by myself in a dingy lodging from January to December. And for me, who am the most sociable creature living, and who detest solitude, it is really and truly a blessing and a most providential circumstance that there are persons who care very much for that kind of thing."

Miss Boyce, then, was not unduly proud of her descent, but she had a pet vanity, founded—as are not most of our pet vanities?—on a much less real and solid basis of fact; she had somehow lost her reckoning of time, thought herself still an attractive-looking woman, and devoutly believed that mankind was deluded by her wig.

Captain Sheardown gallantly led out Lady Alicia Renwick to dinner, and the rest followed in due order.

To old Mr. Snowe, the banker, was allotted the honour of conducting Miss Boyce. Mr. Snowe was a slow-witted, matter-of-fact man. His manner was pompous, and the habitual expression of his heavy face seemed to say, with an air of puzzled surprise, "God bless my soul! If I did not know myself to be so very important a personage, I should suspect you to be laughing at me."

During the early part of the dinner Mr. Snowe was too honestly engrossed in eating and drinking to pay much attention to his neighbour: but when the later stages of the repast arrived he found himself compelled to observe Miss Boyce's lavish coils of false hair, flowing curls, and colossal

chignon. He became a prey to a species of fascination that obliged him to watch some delicate artificial flowers which crowned the lady's head-gear, and which nodded, shook, and trembled, without intermission, in dumb accompaniment to their wearer's vivacious flow of talk.

The dinner passed pleasantly under the genial influence of the host and hostess. When Dr. Begbie rose, and, in an effective speech, rolled out in his richest tones, proposed the health of his dear friends, Captain and Mrs. Sheardown, and wished them many happy returns of that auspicious day, the general enthusiasm was quite ardent. Even Lady Alicia desired the servant to fill her glass a bumper, and grasped her host's hand with her bony fingers as she tossed off the champagne.

Mrs. Begbie shed tears. But that may have been from habit: for Mrs. Begbie always made a point of crying at her husband's sermons. And perhaps his manly voice, alone, had power so to affect her. As compensation, however, when Captain Sheardown returned thanks Mrs. Begbie was perfectly dry-eyed.

When the ladies left the table—by which time Mr. Snowe was openly and undisguisedly contemplating Miss Boyce's luxuriant locks with a fixed and stony glare—and returned to the drawing-room, they resumed a theme which had been discussed at the dinner-table, and on which Lady Alicia and Betsy Boyce were the chief talkers.

"Gale? Gale?" said Miss Boyce, meditatively. "No such name amongst the people *I* know. Sir John Gale! Never heard of him."

"How *very* strange!" murmured Mrs. Begbie.

"But there must be some people, I suppose, of whom Miss Boyce never heard?" said Lady Alicia. She spoke with a strong Scotch accent, rolling her r's very much, and pronounced "never heard" "neverr harrd."

"Millions!" exclaimed Miss Boyce, absolutely squeaking in her desire to be emphatic. "Oh, millions! Your ladyship's married name, for instance, was quite unfamiliar to me, although I remember very well—that is, I have often heard mamma speak of your father, Lord Strathgorm."

Lady Alicia smiled grimly.

"Well," said she, "my dear Miss Boyce, you might very well remember poor papa yourself, for he only died in the spring of 'thirty."

"Goodness!" exclaimed Miss Begbie,

clasping her hands. "Suppose Sir John Gale should turn out to be an impostor! A highwayman, or something. No: I don't mean a highwayman; I believe there are no highwaymen now, but I mean a swindler, or something; don't you know? Goodness!"

"Nonsense, Emmy!" said Miss Begbie's mamma. Veronica's face looked unutterable scorn, but she said nothing. The hostess asked Miss Begbie to play for them, and that young lady complied, not unwillingly. She drew very good music out of the grand piano. Her mother was complacent, Lady Alicia listened with a softened face. Betsy Boyce's ringlets quivered again as she nodded her head in time to a waltz of Chopin. Upon this peaceful scene, the gentlemen entered in a body. Captain Sheardown took a seat beside Miss Boyce, and made her a few gallant speeches.

"Go along, you false creature!" cried Miss Betsy, smiling and tossing her head. "Men were deceivers ever. One foot on sea, and one on shore. Exactly! And you sailor animals are the most faithless of all. But I always loved the blue jackets from a girl, from a mere child! I recollect a most charming creature with whom I once fell desperately in love. He was an Admiral of the Red, and had only one leg, and a frightful scar on his face where a cutlass had gashed one of his eyebrows in two. He was seventy-four, and I adored him. It was in Ireland, at Delaney Park, in the year after—in short, I was a mere baby, not fifteen!"

"At Delaney Park? Really! That was your grandpapa's place, Maud, was it not?" asked Mrs. Sheardown.

"Possible! Are you of the Delancys of Delaney, Miss Desmond? Ah, I remember the youngest girl married Sidney Desmond. To be sure! The eldest, Hilda, made a great marriage at the end of her first season. Poor girl! H'm, h'm, h'm! What is she doing, poor Lady Tallis? And where is she? No one hears or sees anything of her now."

"We do not hear very often from my Aunt Hilda," said Maud, gravely. "Do you want me to accompany that song of Schumann's for you, Mr. Snowe?"

Maud walked away to the piano, and Betsy Boyce poured into the greedy ears of Mrs. Begbie and the old banker, a recital of Lady Tallis's troubles.

"It was considered a great match, *the* match of the year (excepting, of course, the young Earl of Miniver, who was, you

know, the richest minor in England, and married Lady Ermengarde Ermine, the day after he came of age); and, I remember, poor old Sir William Delaney was so delighted."

Mrs. Begbie, who was transported with delight at hearing her friend and visitor so fluent and familiar with these noble names, shook her head gently, and said that that was what came of worldliness. And how strange it was that parents should seek heartless grandeur for their children! For her part, she fervently trusted that Emmy would choose the better part, and look for sound principles in her husband, preferring them to wealth or rank. Though, on the score of birth (if Emmy were influenced by such mundane attractions), there were few families to whose alliance she might not aspire, her grandfather on one side having been a Gaffer—and it was unnecessary to say that the Gaffers were among the few old *pure Saxon* families extant—and her paternal great-grandmamma a De Wynkyn.

"How was it, then?" asked Mr. Snowe, senior, in his pompous, deliberate tone. "Do I follow you? Was Lady Tallis's marriage an inauspicious one, hey?"

"Mercy on us!" cried Betsy Boyce. "Inauspicious! Her husband is one of the most *dreadful* persons! Hilda Delaney was a pretty, good-natured fool when he married her. It was like the wolf and the lamb; he gobbled her up in no time—crunched her bones."

"Law!" exclaimed Miss Emmy.

Mr. Snowe cast a rolling and rather bewildered glance around. "That," said he, impressively, "is shocking, indeed."

"But how do you mean, Miss Boyce?" said Emmy, who took things a little literally, and was excessively inquisitive. "Of course I know that Lady Tallis was not really gobbled up—he, he, he! you have such funny sayings—but what did her husband do?"

Herbert Snowe's song ceased at this moment, and the conversation at the other end of the room came to an abrupt close.

Before the party broke up Mrs. Sheardown came and sat by the vicar of Shipley, and told him, smilingly, that she had a petition to prefer to him. She wanted him to allow Maud to remain at Lowater for a few days. The captain and she would bring Maud in to Shipley when they came to church on Sunday; meanwhile they would send to the vicarage for anything *she might need*. In short, they had set

their hearts on it, and Mr. Levincourt must not refuse.

"I suspect you are not often accustomed to have any request of yours refused, Mrs. Sheardown," said the vicar, gallantly. "If Maud be willing—as, no doubt, she is—I consent with pleasure to her remaining."

Presently, Maud made her way quietly across the room to Veronica. The latter was seated on a small ottoman, which was made to hold only two persons, and was so contrived that one of its occupants must turn his back on the company in the drawing-room while the other faced them. Veronica was leaning back against the crimson cushion. The dark rich background enhanced the purity of her white dress and the pearly tints of her shoulders. Familiar as her beauty was to Maud, she yet paused an instant to look admiringly on the picture presented by the vicar's daughter. Veronica was radiant with gratified vanity and the consciousness of being admired. It heightened the bloom on her cheek, and made her eyes bright with a liquid lustre.

As Maud approached, a gentleman, who had been occupying the other seat on the ottoman, rose to yield it to her.

"Do not let me disturb you," said Maud. "I merely wished to say a word to Miss Levincourt."

The young man bowed, and walked a few paces apart.

Maud told her friend of Mrs. Sheardown's invitation.

A strange look passed over Veronica's face. At first it seemed like a flash of satisfaction; but then came an expression of regret; almost, one would have said, of a momentary alarm. "Shall you stay, Maudie?" said she, taking the other girl's hand in both her own.

"Uncle Charles has said that I may, and—— But I will not stay, dear, if you think it selfish, or if you fancy you will miss me."

"Of course I shall miss you, Maudie."

"Then I won't stay. I will tell Mrs. Sheardown so."

At this moment Emma Begbie came up to them, giggling after her manner, which was half spiteful, whole silly.

"My goodness, Miss Levincourt!" she exclaimed, bending over the ottoman, "*what* a flirtation you have been having with that young Lockwood! What is he like to talk to?"

"Very much like a gentleman," answered Veronica, with cold hauteur.

"O gracious! But he isn't really one, you know. Lady Alicia knows all about his father. He was quite a common person. But isn't he handsome, this young man? You must mind what you're about if you stay in the same house with him, Miss Desmond, for I am sure Miss Levincourt would never forgive you if you were to make yourself too agreeable to him. She evidently looks upon him as her conquest. Don't you, Miss Levincourt? He, he, he!"

Veronica looked after her scornfully, as she went away. "What an ill-bred idiot that girl is," she said. Then, after a moment, she added, "Of course I shall miss you, Maudie. But you must stay. You will not be away very long?"

"Only till Sunday. Was that gentleman who was talking to you Mr. Lockwood? I had not been introduced to him."

"Yes. Good-night, Maudie. The fly is come, I suppose, for I see papa telegraphing across the room. Good-bye."

Veronica threw herself back in a corner of the fly, wrapped in her warm shawl and hood, and remained silent. The vicar fell asleep. In about ten minutes their vehicle drew aside to allow another carriage to pass. It was the well-appointed equipage of the rector of Hammick. The horses dashed along swiftly, their silver-mounted harness glistening in the moonlight.

Veronica drew still further back into her corner, and closed her eyes. But she did not sleep. Her brain was busy. And the jolting of the crazy old fly from the Crown Inn at Shipley Magna kept up a sort of rhythmic accompaniment to the dance of strange fancies, hopes, and plans, that whirled through her mind.

RECENT ART PURCHASES.

THERE is a special subject, which comes up inevitably at periodical intervals of irregular length, in discussing which a curious contrast of sentiments—of reckless confidence on the one side, and of extreme diffidence on the other—is manifested by the persons concerned in handling it. One faction evinces a great readiness to take shelter behind the judgments of all sorts of constituted authorities; and the other finds itself in a position to pronounce opinions of an oracular or ex cathedra sort, couched sometimes in such technical terms as even professional persons do not in the least understand. It will be readily divined that the special subject in question is Art.

On no occasion is a more marked diffidence shown than is manifested by the more modest of these two factions when any discussion upon matters connected with Art is mooted, either

in those grave assemblies in which all the great public questions of the day are discussed, or in the less formidable gatherings in private life. There is an amount of humility displayed by certain among these illustrious persons which is almost ostentatious; those two or three special individuals, even, who are supposed to know something more about art matters than their fellows, being very apt to get behind each other, as it were, and quote each other, and so to elude, as far as possible, the necessity of expressing any distinct opinion of their own. Nothing can be more complete than the contrast to this mental attitude presented by the conduct of that other class, the members of which are afflicted with no doubts or misgivings respecting the amount of their art-knowledge and the accuracy of their art-instincts. The extent to which these good people know "all about it" is altogether surprising. They are in a position to enlighten us, not only as to the actual doings of the old masters, but even as to their intentions and innermost motives. They know what every one of them meant by every touch in every one of his compositions, and what was the favourite manner of working of each.

A certain art question which has recently been the subject of much discussion has given to the adherents of each of these two schools—the confident and the diffident—many opportunities of displaying their respective characteristics. Within the last year or two, there have been added to the national collection in Trafalgar-square, three pictures, all of considerable note. Two of them have been made the subject of an uncommon amount of discussion; first, as to whether they be really by the masters to whom they are ascribed; secondly, as to their intrinsic merit as pictures, by whomsoever painted. These three works of art are: an Entombment, said to be an unfinished work by Michael Angelo; a picture of Christ Blessing Little Children, ascribed to Rembrandt; and a representation of the courtyard of a house in Holland, by De Hooze.

In the judgment of probably all who visit the National Gallery, with the special intention of examining these comparatively new purchases, the first-mentioned will be the least popular. To begin with: it is a picture in an unfinished and fragmentary condition, and that alone is a great defect in the eyes of the public. Considerable portions of the panel, or canvas, on which it is painted, are left entirely bare, and no one of the figures, though they are blocked out very carefully, and fitted into their places with much labour, is completely finished. It may be, to some extent, because the painting of these figures is thus incompletely carried out that they present an ungainly and awkward appearance, which is very ugly and uninviting. It is not, however, wholly their unfinished condition which causes this impression to be conveyed. The positions and attitudes of the principal figures are constrained and unnatural, and would probably have been rendered very little less so, by any amount of sub-

sequent finish which might have been bestowed upon them. This awkwardness and ungainliness, both of the general grouping and of the individual attitudes of each of the persons represented, is indeed very striking and distressing. The figure of the Saviour is being carried towards the spectator, down an incline, composed apparently of long shallow steps. It is supported by three persons; one—the face only indicated—sustaining the head and chest from behind; two others, one on each side, supporting the main weight of the body by means of a linen cloth passed under the lower limbs. The dead figure is thus held up in a nearly perpendicular position, unreposeful and unseemly, the position of the legs and feet conveying the idea that they are dangling, and catching against the ground as the body is dragged along. There is nothing of tenderness or feeling in the action of either of the figures which support the weight of the dead Saviour, nor even, as it seems to the writer, of truthfulness in action. The picture is a fragment, and a very unpleasant fragment, appealing *only* to the artist, and to him alone, by any possibility, proving of the slightest interest. To those thus initiated, it will be seen that there is in the drawing—the head of the Saviour, for instance—considerable indication of power. This head of the Saviour is, indeed, in all respects, in form, in pose, and in expression, exceedingly beautiful. The upper part of the figure, too, is finely and subtly drawn. The professional artist will be able to detect other instances of fine expression of individual form: as in the female figure to the right of the spectator. He will, moreover, see a certain gracefulness in this same figure, and much expression of nervous force and energy in the strained look of the arms and hands by which the weight of the corpse is sustained. It is probably because of these things, because of a certain swing in the lines of these two figures which support the body of the Saviour, and because of the strong grasping action of the hands, and other indications of a feeling for drawing, that this picture has been ascribed to Michael Angelo; but its internal evidence is far from convincing, and there is much in the look of the whole composition more suggestive of an early German than of an Italian origin. Be the picture by whomsoever it may, it is a very unpleasant picture, and capable of affording gratification only to the strictly professional spectator.

As a curiosity; as a picture affording in its very incompleteness some sort of evidence as to the manner in which the painters of a particular time prepared their work; and as a specimen of art containing some passages of technical merit; this purchase may be pronounced to have been one on which the public money has been well expended. But this is surely all that can be granted. That it is a beautiful or attractive work seems, to the humble individual who writes these lines, a *judgment entirely impossible* to be sustained.

But perhaps the most important of the

recent additions to the national collection is the new Rembrandt, Christ Blessing Little Children. It was purchased for no less a sum than seven thousand pounds, and occupies what used to be, in the days of the old Royal Academy, the place of honour in the great room.

In this picture there is much that is calculated to set every man who looks at it thinking. He will think when he first looks at it what an ugly and repulsive picture it is, and he will in all probability go on thinking so, until the happy moment arrives when he gets up from his seat before it and goes away. It is a picture calculated in an eminent degree to depress the mind of the spectator. The order of things adhered to, is low and squalid, every person represented is of the commonest and most vulgar type. I suppose that no representation of the Saviour has ever been attempted, into which so little of elevation and grandeur has been infused. There is nothing actually repulsive about this figure, indeed, there is some expression of kindness and patience about the features, but the type is most disastrously common. The figure is that of a much older man than we ordinarily see represented in pictures of Christ, and is short and ungainly in a painful degree. The hands are thick and ponderous, and the foot which is shown is so coarse and ugly that one can hardly bring oneself to look at it. There is no relief from the distressing vulgarity which pervades this picture. The women who bring their children—nay, the children, too—are coarse hideous bores, entirely without any touch of beauty or sentiment. There is no charm of colour in the picture, which is full of hot browns and reds, nor any of that magic of effect which we look for in the works of Rembrandt, and which we count upon to cover the multitude of his sins against what we call the "Beautiful."

But when all this has been said, and a great deal more might be added to prove what a disheartening work of art this is to sit before for half an hour, it is only fair to add that it is a picture which may be considered as having some right to appear in our national collection, though not perhaps to occupy a post of high honour in it.

In the first place, as far as internal evidence goes, there seems no very special reason to conclude that it is other than a genuine Rembrandt, though assuredly it is not one of his finest works. The very faults of the picture are the faults of Rembrandt. It is well known that the very lowest standard of form and beauty we can conceive, must be accepted before we proceed to criticise this master at all, and this should be always borne in mind in approaching his work. It is said of some people that they have certain qualifications, connected with the senses, which specially fit them for pursuits of various kinds. Of one we say that he has an eye for colour, and of another that he has an ear for harmony. Rembrandt possessed a special fitness for the

study of ugliness. He had an eye for the ugly. He revelled in it. He selected his types with a view to it, and, having done so, represented them as even uglier than they were in nature. The only kind of beauty which he seemed able to feel, and the only kind of sentiment, were the beauty and sentiment of *chiaroscuro*; or, in plain English, of light and shade. Beauty and refinement of form were a dead letter to him.

Accepting this low standard, and expecting nothing in the way of elevation or of nobleness, we shall find many things in this picture which indicate undoubted power and originality in the painter. It possesses one great negative merit, at all events, which is exceedingly rare in representations of this subject: it is not mawkish. It is common in pictures in which this particular scene has been chosen for pictorial presentation, to find an unnatural and forced assumption of exalted feeling expressed in the faces and bearing of the children who are brought to be blessed by Christ. This is hardly true to nature. The children are spoken of in the New Testament narrative as being "brought," not as coming. Their approach to the Saviour was the doing of their parents, or those who had charge of them, and any signs of devotional feeling on the part of the children indicated by the artist, would be out of place. The painter of this picture has gone, in his pursuit of matter-of-fact reality, to the very opposite extreme. The little girl on whose head the Saviour lays his hand, and who occupies the central place in the composition, is as far as can be imagined, from manifesting any feeling of a devout or reverential sort. Her head is turned away, and she is looking eagerly out of the picture as if after some playfellow or companion. Her left hand, which Christ has taken in his, holds an apple with a piece bitten out of it; and the forefinger of her right hand is thrust into her mouth, conveying the idea that she is poking with it at some fragment of the apple which has stuck between her teeth. Nothing can be more ungainly, more common, more ugly, than this child's action; but the conception, as indicating insensibility on the part of the child, is daring and original, though somewhat shocking, and proves, at least, that the artist who elaborated it must have been possessed of an unconventional, if of a coarse and untender, habit of mind.

The woman carrying a baby, which is soon to be a candidate for the Saviour's attention, is the next most prominent figure in the composition; and she, too, presents an entirely careless and unreverential appearance. The action of her hand, with which she seems to be pushing away the child with the apple, and a slight frown upon her brow, appear to indicate that she considers that this particular infant has had quite as much attention bestowed upon her as she can lay claim to, and that it is time for her own baby to be noticed. The other figures in the composition are merely those of peasants standing around: one of them in the background lifting up a child,

which stretches out its hands as if eager for a share of attention with the others.

Originality of treatment and a certain power of rendering rugged and ungainly truth, as shown in the sturdily drawn figures of the Dutch peasants, these are the strong points of the so-called Rembrandt. Whether these are sufficient to compensate us for an expenditure of seven thousand pounds of the public money, must remain an open question.

It is pleasant to turn from these two works of art to the new De Hooze, which has been recently hung in the rooms in Trafalgar-square, and which is so good a specimen of this charming artist's work, as to merit any amount of eulogy.

There seems abundant reason to believe that some artists of the great Flemish school were of opinion that a whole lifetime was barely long enough for the acquisition of the power of doing some one thing, in connexion with their art, perfectly well. To be able to paint the interior of a spotlessly clean kitchen, or of a family living-room, with a woman sitting reading by the window, or making herself more practically useful by peeling a carrot or a turnip, was all that some of these unambitious Dutchmen desired. But, then, how well these men got to do it at last; with what exquisite truthfulness and fidelity to nature; and more than that, with what an extraordinary capability of investing what one would think must be entirely common-place and uninteresting with a certain charm of sentiment!

Among the artists of the Flemish school who most rigidly confined themselves to this exclusive kind of study, Peter de Hooze was one of the most remarkable. There was a certain scene which appeared to be his notion of a terrestrial paradise, in truth, just the back-yard of a comfortable Flemish residence (probably his own), which he seems to have determined in early life that he would acquire the power of reproducing as no other scene was ever reproduced by mortal man. This back-yard was his delight. Sometimes he would for a brief season abandon it, and, going inside the comfortable Dutch residence of which it formed a part, would make a study of an interior by way of a change. Sometimes, even, as in the magnificent specimen of this artist's work lately sold at Paris for upwards of seventeen thousand pounds, he would put forth all his power, and show that he could deal with a composition containing a great number of figures; still, when he wanted to enjoy himself, he always went back to his favourite inclosure, to its cleanliness, its shade, its pearly coolness, and always with fresh appreciation and relish; and here he would place those figures of Dutch men and women which were as unvaryingly the same as were the backgrounds by which they were hemmed in and surrounded.

The picture lately added to our public collection is one of these favourites of the painter. Here is the courtyard with its pavement of little bricks set crosswise, and traversed diagonally by a thin earthenware drain or pipe;

here are the pump, and the stone sink and the pail, and the broom propped against the wall. Here is the invariable wooden partition dividing the yard from the red-brick and tiled dwelling-house, and with a door (open) through which the little prim garden peeps deliciously. A scullion plumped down on her knees is cleaning a fat turbot in the middle of the yard; a housewife with her back to the spectator looks on, and takes care that all is done as it should be; the proprietor of the establishment is seen in the distance, advancing along the path which borders the little prim garden beyond the partition. He is coming home to smoke his pipe, and wait calmly until the turbot is ready, when he will sit down and make a comfortable meal. This is all; there is nothing of dramatic incident, no splendour of gorgeous tints, no display of beautiful scenery. The colouring is sober and sedate in the extreme. The house-mistress is habited in a black sort of jacket, trimmed with swans'-down, and wears a grey dress; the servant is clad in grey likewise; the distant figure of the bourgeois in black. The background tints are warm and mellow, but chiefly negative, with delicate greys, and glowing but subdued red bricks and tiles, backed by a cool fresh sky, such as we know well in the damp climates of England and Flanders, with tender haze of thinly veiled blue, seen through a medium of atmosphere thick enough to be distinctly visible in all weathers.

Not interesting materials these, it will be said, of which to make up a picture. And yet the fact remains that the picture is delightful in a most uncommon degree, and that, strange to say, not by any means from a purely technical point of view. True, that from that point of view it is perfect beyond all description; true, that the manipulation is so delicate that no thought or remembrance of *paint* is suggested as one examines the delicious surface; true, that the tone of colour which pervades the whole is so inexpressibly harmonious, that the substitution of any shade that is not here, for any shade that is here, would offend the eye, as a false note in music does the ear; true, that the balance of the composition is accurate to a hair, and the arrangement of light and shade a very triumph of that hidden art which is too proud to show itself—granted all this, granted that the picture, as a piece of technical achievement, leaves positively nothing to be desired, and still, though you have said much, you have not said all. For wonderful as it may seem, it is yet certainly the case that, in pictures as in some other matters, it is not the bringing together of the grandest and most elevated materials that will insure the production of a noble result. This may be done indeed, and nothing come of it whatsoever: just as you will sometimes see in nature, a face, all the parts of which are grand and symmetrical, but which will fail to move you in any way: while another, of which the features are comparatively homely, will have about it something of *sentiment which shall be inexpressibly touch-*

ing and attractive. So it is with this picture of De Hooe in the National Gallery. It is a question of a scullion, and a turbot, and a pump, and a slop-pail, and yet out of these materials a picture is got which has about it more of something, which is almost poetry, than many an ambitious representation of mountain passes, and pine-clad hills with figures in the foreground placed in all sorts of romantic situations, or doing nothing in the most approved classical style. In this Flemish courtyard, and in the prim garden, and round about the comfortable homestead seen beyond, there lingers a sense of tranquil home existence, of harmless enjoyment, of a decorous and well-ordered life, which conveys what it is the highest achievement of any work of art to convey: the suggestion of a sentiment, intensely felt, though it cannot be logically defined.

In conclusion, it may be remarked of all three pictures that, as additions to a collection in which the achieving of a certain fulness and completeness is quite as distinctly an object as the affording of pleasure and gratification to the lovers of beautiful works of art, their purchase,—even though, in the case of the alleged Rembrandt, at an enormous expense, has been upon the whole, a justifiable proceeding.

THE SUMMER POOL.

THERE is a singing in the summer air,
The blue and brown moths flutter o'er the grass,
The stubble bird is creaking in the wheat,
And perch'd upon the honeysuckle-hedge
Pipes the green linnet. O the golden world!
The stir of life on every blade of grass,
The motion and the joy on every bough,
The glad feast everywhere, for things that love
The sunshine, and for things that love the shade!

Aimlessly wandering with weary feet,
Watching the woolly clouds that wander by,
I come upon a lovely place of shade,
A still green pool where with soft sound and stir
The shadows of o'er-hanging branches sleep,
Save where they leave one dreamy space of blue,
O'er whose soft stillness ever and anon
The feathery cirrus blows. Here unaware
I pause, and leaning on my staff I add
A shadow to the shadows; and behold!
Dim dreams steal down upon me, with a hum
Of little wings, a murmuring of boughs,
The dusky stir and motion dwelling here
Within this small green world. O'er shadowed
By dusky greenery, tho' all around
The sunshine throbs on fields of wheat and bean,
Downward I gaze into the dreamy blue,
And pass into a waking sleep, wherein
The green boughs rustle, feathery wreaths of cloud
Pass softly piloted by golden airs,
The air is still, no bird sings any more,
And, helpless as a tiny flying thing,
I am alone in all the world with God.

The wind dies—not a leaf stirs—in the pool
The fly scarce moves;—earth seems to hold her breath
Until her heart stops, listening silently
For the far footsteps of the coming Rain!

While thus I pause, it seems that I have gained
New eyes to see; my brain grows sensitive
To trivial things that, at another hour,
Had passed unheeded. Suddenly the air
Shivers, the shadows in whose midst I stand

Tremble and blacken;—the blue eye o' the pool
Is closed and clouded; with a shrill sharp cry,
Oiling its wings, a swallow darteth past,
And weeding flowers beneath my feet thrust up
Their leaves to feel the coming shower. O hark!
The thirsty leaves are troubled into sighs,
And up above me, on the glistening boughs,
Patters the summer rain!

Into a nook,
Screen'd by thick foliage of oak and beech,
I creep for shelter; and the summer shower
Murmurs around me. In a dream I watch
And listen. O the sweetness of the sounds.
The pattering rain, the murmurous sigh of leaves,
The deep warm breathing of the scented air,
They sink into my soul—until at last
Comes the soft ceasing of the gentle fall,
And lo! the eye of blue within the pool
Opens again, while in a silv'ern gleam
The jewels twinkle moistly on the leaves,
Or, shaken downward by the summer wind,
Fall melting on the pool in rings of light!

LITTLE PAUPER BOARDERS.

ONE of the most important and pressing of all the important and pressing problems connected with the workhouse system, concerns the rearing and education of pauper children; of those pauper children, that is to say, who by reason of the death or disappearance of their parents are thrown entirely upon the hands of the parish, or, in other words, are dependent solely upon the State. According to the practice generally adopted at the present time, these unfortunates receive the whole of their education within the walls of the workhouse. However well conducted the workhouse, however much pains and care be taken with the children, the results are not satisfactory. The monotonous, semi-prison life of the "House" is a most unsuitable atmosphere for the growth of a child's intelligence; the sordid, hopeless pauperism of its surroundings must degrade and depress the child's mind. Hence it is not surprising to find that when a child who has from birth, or from earliest youth, been reared and educated in the workhouse, is sent forth to make its first start in life, it is found to be but seldom fitted for the struggle. School education it may have had, and may carry away with it a fair amount of book-knowledge; but of that other knowledge of the world and of human life, which is only to be got by freedom of thought and actual contact with the world itself, it possesses no jot. What little contact with the outer world it may, unfortunately for itself and for society, have had, is of the worst kind. It is almost impossible to over-estimate the amount of damage that may be, and is, done, to these permanent pauper children, by the casual chil-

dren who, with their parents, pass through the workhouse from time to time, and whose workhouse lives are interludes in lives of vagrancy and crime. So, either the workhouse-bred child on its entrance into active life is unable, in its helpless awkwardness, to avail itself of the little it actually does know, or it is already ripe for evil-doing. In either case it is naturally looked at with some dislike in the labour market. So, too often, many such children are gradually drafted, willing recruits, into the great army of crime, or are content to drift back to the workhouse and a life of lazy, shiftless pauperism.

The plan of removing the children altogether from the workhouse, and of establishing district schools, has been tried in many parishes. Although this system is an improvement on the other, the results are far from satisfactory. The tide of casual children flows through the district, as through the workhouse school, and contamination surely follows. The children from the district schools are better able to hold their own in the world than those brought up exclusively in the workhouse; but it is doubtful whether, in the long run, they turn out any better. For instance: seven years ago, chance brought to light the existence of an amount of evil in the Eton workhouse school, that necessitated its being forthwith broken up. The guardians sent their pauper children to the district school at Hanwell. Two years sufficed to put the guardians out of conceit with this system, and the children were removed. We may suppose they had good reasons for this step. They most certainly ought to have known what a bad school was, as, in the investigation into the condition of their own workhouse school, it had been discovered that between January, 1858, and December, 1861, forty per cent of the children had turned out ill. An officer of the separate schools for the Manchester and Liverpool Unions, is reported to have said, in answer to a question as to what proportion of girls sent from that establishment had gone wrong: "Do not ask me: it is so painful that I can hardly tell you the extent to which evil will predominate in those proceeding from our institution." Similarly, we read of the report of the Kirkdale separate school being: "The number of girls who came to grief, who went out from that institution, was painful to think of, it was so large." And these are by no means isolated cases. Leaving out of sight for a moment the

question of bodily health, there can be no doubt that the establishment of large district schools has not conducted in any appreciable degree to the improvement of the moral tone of the children. Neither is the education imparted in such schools at all a satisfactory preparation for the business of life. As to the question of health, it is now almost universally admitted that the gathering together under one roof of large numbers of children of the pauper class, ill-nourished and poor in the vital principle as they almost invariably are, is in the highest degree detrimental to their physical well-doing.

It would seem, then, that the solution of the problem must lie in some system different from either of those in general use. If the pauper children who are entirely dependent on the parish, or, to speak more correctly, the State, cannot be satisfactorily educated to be good citizens and useful members of society, under existing circumstances, how can the desired result be more nearly approached?

The only alternative system appears to be that under which the children are boarded-out with such persons as may be willing to take charge of them and to look after their education in consideration of the weekly amount to be received from the guardians, and the value of such services as the children may, as they come to be of an age to work, be able to render. And, as the miserable results of the old plan of parish apprenticeship are still fresh in the public mind, it is well that this boarding-out system should be carefully considered and impartially judged of; without, on the one hand, allowing it to suffer by being confounded with the old bad plan; and without, on the other, allowing the defects and positive harmfulness of the present workhouse and district schools to prejudice us in favour of the boarding-out system, on the ground of any change being a change for the better.

Nothing could have been worse than the old system of parish apprenticeships. The children were simply got rid of by the parish authorities, and handed over with little inquiry or care to the first comer; their subsequent fate, as a rule, was a matter of supreme indifference to their legal guardians. The gentleman in the white waistcoat, it will be remembered, was delighted at the prospect of securing for Oliver Twist so amiable a master as Mr. Gamfield, and we may be very certain *that if the fates had destined Oliver's ribs*

to have made intimate acquaintance with the chimney-sweep's cudgel, the gentleman in the white waistcoat would have considered the arrangement highly satisfactory. Supervision, without which, constantly and carefully exercised, the system was one of mere slavery, was rarely employed at all; and even when Mr. Bumble, the beadle, went now and then through the form of visiting and inquiry, it was a perfunctory ceremony worse than useless. But, it must be borne in mind, that in those days public opinion concerned itself far less about the condition of the pauper class than it does now; in fact, as to such matters there was little or no public opinion. Now-a-days there is an increased certainty of publicity, and the acts of boards of guardians and their subordinates are subjected to a careful and jealous scrutiny in all parts of the country. It is worth while to consider whether, out of the wreck of the system of parish apprenticeships, and parish child-farming, under which so many Olivers and Dicks suffered miserably, some boarding-out system, at once simple and humane, cannot be adopted.

An excellent report on this important subject, drawn up by a committee of the Bath Board of Guardians, is before us. Its contents will assist us in the consideration of what is to be said in favour of the plan.

It appears, from a report of Sir John M'Neil, head of the Scottish poor-law authorities, dated July 22, 1862, that the system of boarding-out pauper children singly, or in twos or threes, has been in practical and successful working in Scotland for many years. The children are placed with persons of the working class, selected by an officer of the parochial board, and a close supervision is exercised over the manner in which the children live, and the kind of treatment they receive. The cost of their board and lodging, clothing, &c., is rather more than it would be in the workhouse, but it is considered that this increase is far more than counterbalanced by the improvement in the children's condition, physical and moral. They appear to lose sight of their connexion with the workhouse in a very short time, and to acquire habits of independence and continuous industry, almost impossible to be attained by children whose experience has not been drawn from out-of-door life. Sir John is strongly in favour of the system.

Mr. Kemp, governor of the Edinburgh Union, writes, in 1869: "We have no separate building for the children who are

inmates, nor is there such in any workhouse in Scotland to my knowledge; all attempts to separate children in the larger workhouses have been given up years ago." Mr. Kemp adds that the boarding system is "a plan which long experience has tested, and which we find to work well;" and he gives this valuable testimony to its practical success: "We very seldom indeed have any of our children brought back to the workhouse, or falling into pauper habits; the orphan and the outcast are especially saved from these results. We have at this moment three hundred and thirty boys and girls boarded in the country." Mr. Kemp's evidence is the more valuable, seeing that when he first went to Scotland he was disappointed to find the boarding system in force. "I looked upon the plan at first with no great favour," he says, but after a time, and after practical investigation, the result was, "a conviction strongly forced upon my mind that the plan of boarding-out children with the cottagers around the country was the best mode of rearing orphan children I had yet seen." And to this opinion Mr. Kemp adheres.

Experience has shown the assistant inspector of the Aberdeen Union "that the country is the best place for the children, as they merge into the rural population, and give us no further trouble." It may be hoped that this means no further trouble when they are grown up; while they are still little pauper boarders it is clear that trouble, in the shape of needful supervision and watchful care, they must cause. The inspector of workhouse children in Glasgow bears similar testimony to the value of the practice which "is of long standing here, and much liked." Indeed from all parts of Scotland there comes but one opinion, and that most favourable.

In England, the system has not yet made so much progress. Possibly this is in great part due to the failure of an attempt to introduce something of the sort in the metropolitan parishes seventy or eighty years ago. Want of proper supervision ruined this attempt. Again, from their great size and the large numbers which have to be dealt with, the metropolitan parishes are scarcely the most favourable field for the first working of such a system. But even here the parish authorities seem to be discovering the dangers and inconveniences of the workhouse system. The parishes of Kensington and St. Margaret's, Westminster,

for instance, are about to spend upwards of twenty-seven thousand pounds for a district school, which will accommodate only eight hundred and fifty children: a small number compared with those in receipt, at the date of the last returns, of outdoor relief. But it would be a difficult matter to deal with the fifty-three thousand two hundred and eighty-five children in receipt of outdoor relief in the metropolitan parishes, according to the returns for March of the present year, by the boarding-out system; and in London, at least, it could only be resorted to as one of several means of disposing of the children.

But in the country, where the numbers are far more manageable, the case is very different. The Bath committee have gathered evidence from all parts of the country; and wherever the system has been tried, the testimony borne to its value is invariably favourable.

Mr. Archer, chairman of the Highworth and Swindon Board of Guardians, reports very favourably of its success in his district, where it has been in operation seven or eight years. The Highworth and Swindon guardians board out as many children as they possibly can, and are satisfied with the system, which they find cheaper as well as better than keeping them in the workhouse. Mr. Evans, of Boveney Court, Windsor, a guardian of the Eton Union, reports, "We are fully satisfied with our plan of boarding-out children in the neighbourhood," and also bears witness to its cheapness. "The system," according to Mr. Evans, "has always worked satisfactorily." We have seen in the early part of this paper, how the old system broke down utterly in this district. Mr. Newman, of the Leominster Board of Guardians who administers the affairs of a small union, hits the right nail on the head when he says that the plan requires most careful watching, and this expression of opinion renders his further remark, that when successful the result is worth any pains, of all the more value. It is the custom, it seems, in the Leominster Union, to board children with relatives—in fact, of thirty-two children boarded out, twenty-two are with relatives. Possibly this state of things arises in some way from the peculiarities of a rural district. It may be doubtful how far this arrangement is desirable. From the Horncastle Union, where the boarding-out plan has been but recently adopted, and where the

persons who take the children are usually small farmers or tradesmen, the report is favourable. It will be seen that the English experience asserts the superior economy of the boarding-out system as against keeping the children in the workhouse; and that in this respect it differs from Sir John McNeil's report.

Some of the chief objections to the plan were very concisely put, in a letter addressed, in April last, to Colonel C. W. Grant, the chairman of the Boarding-out Committee of the Bath Union, from the Poor Law Board. The board, they say, "have hitherto been consistently opposed to the scheme, influenced mainly by the consideration that the guardians would be unable to exercise the necessary control and supervision of the children who may be removed from the workhouse and placed under the charge of those whose chief object in taking the children would be to make a profit of the sums allowed for their maintenance." Here the Poor Law Board most undoubtedly detects the weakest part of the scheme. "Other strong objections occurred to the board, such as the difficulty of insuring that some regular education for the children is given, as in the schools attached to the union." These considerations, however, do not appear to have had a strong deterrent effect on the board, for they go on to say: "On the other hand, the board are aware that the system of boarding-out children has been in operation for many years in Scotland with apparent success. The board are fully sensible of the many arguments which can be urged in favour of the plan, and, provided that they could be satisfied that a thorough system of efficient supervision and control would be established by the guardians, and the most rigid inquiry instituted, at short intervals, into the treatment and education of the children, the board have come to the conclusion that they ought not to discourage the guardians from giving the plan a fair trial."

Armed with this authority, and fortified by the testimony from other unions, of which we have given examples, the Bath committee set on foot inquiries as to whether there would be any difficulty in finding fit and proper persons to take charge of the children for a fair remuneration. Satisfactory replies being obtained, the next thing that remained was to fix what that remuneration should be. And here it was necessary, above all things, to bear in mind the warning of the Poor Law Board, and to be sure that the sum offered, while

sufficient to induce respectable people to receive pauper boarders into their families, should not be so large as to tempt greed.

In the Edinburgh Union half-a-crown a week is paid with each child, and in some cases even more: clothing is given, school fees and medicine are paid for by the Glasgow and Aberdeen Unions, the amount allowed is about the same. In these Unions, it is sensibly and wisely provided that the clothing provided for the children shall not be such as to make them conspicuous among their fellows. Edinburgh says, "clothing not of a workhouse character." Glasgow "supplies clothing of such a kind as to prevent their being known as pauper children;" while Aberdeen, still more explicit, gives "clothing of the same style and quality that a child usually wears." One of the recommendations in favour of the boarding-out system, is, that it tends to encourage the children to shake themselves free from the clinging vices engendered by a life of pauperism, to cultivate their self-respect and to become worthy and independent members of society. It is clearly insensible that these desirable results can be brought about, if the "charity-school" system of a hideous distinctive dress is maintained: a system that has been the bane of many otherwise excellent institutions, and which still survives almost very much to the national disgrace.

Of the English unions consulted, Leominster gives half-a-crown a week with clothes: a good outfit being given to the child with; but if there is entire satisfaction the child is well done for (a curious expression, but Leominster's own), clothing is occasionally given: in which case the chairman always requires the child to be shown to the board. The Highworth Swindon Board give half-a-crown a week and half a guinea a quarter for clothes besides an outfit of clothing to begin with. Eton is higher in the money scale, at three shillings and sixpence, as well as an outfit, and six shillings and sixpence a quarter for clothes after the first months. At Caistor, the payment is three shillings and ninepence per week, thirty-five shillings for outfit. Hornsea gives for the first year three shillings a week and outfit, and makes a fresh arrangement after the first year. King's Norton and Chorlton each give three shilling clothes.

Not only are these payments considered sufficient for the children's well-doing

they result in great saving to the rate-payers. Taking the yearly cost of a boarder at ten pounds, which is about the average amount, the charge contrasts favourably with such figures as are presented by the Leeds Industrial School, where each child costs more than fifteen pounds a year, without reckoning interest of money on the school buildings, which cost some seventeen thousand pounds, and which, at five per cent, would raise the cost of each child by about two pounds annually. In the eighteenth annual report of the Poor Law Board, it appears that in twenty-five years six district schools have been established, at an annual average expense per child of nearly twenty pounds. At the Central London School, Hanwell, the expense contrasts still more unfavourably with the boarding-out charges: being twenty-eight pounds for each child.

The Bath Committee, who appear to have set about their work with an earnest sense of their responsibility, and with a business-like determination to do the best they could for their helpless charges—which example we take this opportunity of commending to the attention of certain guardians of the poor in the disagreeably renowned parish of St. Pancras, London—upon consideration of all this evidence, advised:

That, the boarding-out system should be adopted in the Bath Union. That, with each child should be given three shillings a week, an outfit of clothes such as are worn by the children of the labouring poor, and six shillings and sixpence a quarter after the first three months for repairing clothes and replacing them as required; school fees; and attendance of medical officers.

On the 7th of April in this year, this report was adopted by the guardians with only two dissentient voices out of a board of thirty-three; and the boarding-out system is consequently now in full operation in the Bath Union.

Excellent rules have been drawn up for the supervision of the children; and the particulars required to be ascertained by the relieving officer, and countersigned by a guardian of the parish, are extremely sensible and well calculated to get at the truth. The visitors at schools attended by boarder-children, are also required to furnish periodically, answers to a set of questions. There is no encouragement to fussy amateur interference, harmful to the interests of the children, and likely to lead to remissness on the part of the official inspectors. The work is directed to be done in a business-like way by proper

officials, and the Bath Guardians begin their instructions to persons receiving boarders from the union in these words:

"The Guardians of the Bath Union, anxious for the welfare of the children whom the failure of their natural protectors have thrown upon their care, believe that they will best discharge their trust by placing the children with families in which they will learn lessons of industry, frugality, and self-reliance, and be brought up in the fear of God and the practice of virtue."

The Bath Guardians have already been met, pretty frequently, by references to Mrs. Mann and Mrs. Sowerberry, to the value of Mr. Bumble's inspections, and to the cruel treatment of Oliver Twist. Even the ghost of Mother Brownrigg has been invoked by their opponents. Having some authority to speak in the name of Oliver Twist, we here record on his behalf that he suffered from no system, but suffered from an utter absence of system; and that it was his misfortune to be a pauper child in days when pauper children were out of sight and out of mind. The light has been let in upon them since, and no Cæsar, individual or corporate, can hide their sun with a blanket, or so much as make the attempt, without being publicly tossed in it.

NATURAL GHOSTS.

WITHOUT saying a word for or against the supernatural appearance of dead and dying men, ministering spirits, bad spirits, and all the demons that are found in fire, air, flood, or underground, let us give a good word to the ghosts that are no ghosts. Some of them are quite natural and wholesome, seen by healthy persons, and often by more than one person at the same time. Others are natural and unwholesome, seen usually by sick persons, and, in nearly all cases, by one person only. The familiar form of the healthy, natural apparition is our good old friend, our other self, whom we have had the pleasure of seeing a great many times in print, the giant of the Brocken. I climb the Brocken to see the sunrise on a calm morning, and standing on the granite rocks known as the Tempelskanzel, observe that the other mountains towards the south-west lying under the Brocken are covered with thick clouds. Up rises the sun behind me, and forth starts the giant, five or six hundred feet high, who bestrides the clouds for a couple of seconds and is gone. To see one's shadow in this fashion there needs a horizontal sunbeam and a bank of vapour of the right sort in the right place. We may go up the Brocken at sunrise a dozen times and hardly have a chance of finding sunbeam and vapour-bank disposed to favour us with the raising of this ghost. The ghost of Cæsar that appeared to Brutus at Philippi is as much of a

commonplace as the spectre of the Brocken, and as natural. Was not Hobbes of Malmesbury a great philosopher, who ought to know? "We read," says Hobbes, "of Marcus Brutus (one that had his life given him by Julius Cæsar, and was also his favourite, and notwithstanding murdered him) how at Philippi the night before he gave battle to Augustus Cæsar he saw a fearful apparition, which is commonly related by historians as a vision; but considering the circumstances, one may easily judge to have been a short dream. For sitting in his tent pensive and troubled with the horror of his rash act, it was not hard for him, slumbering in the cold, to dream of that which most affrighted him; which fear, as by degrees it made him awake, so also it must needs make the apparition by degrees to vanish; and having no assurance that he slept, he could have no cause to think it a dream or anything but a vision." Then there is moonshine. It makes many things half visible, which timid folks interpret into shapes of terror; burglars, perhaps, if their fears are of the mundane sort; and if their taste incline to the eerie, when the light is dim and silence rules, they will know how to suspect,

In every bush a hovering shade,
A groan in every sound.

Moreover, there is *locus-pocus* in its regular commercial aspect, as it was abroad in the days of the Egyptians, and as it is at home in these present days. It is not difficult to understand how the Egyptian priests showed visions on their temple walls, or reflected pictures from the surface of great bowls of water. The devils shown by a conjuror to Benvenuto Cellini were doubtless let loose from a magic lantern. Some drugs give a man spectral illusions. A conjuror offered Dr. Alderson a prescription for a mixture of antimony, sulphur, and other things, which should cause the person taking it to be haunted by spectres.

A philosopher older than Hobbes, the poet Lucretius, supposed that all ghosts were natural productions, being merely thin pellicles cast off from the body.

Next, for 'tis time, my Muse declares and sings,
declares and sings through the medium of Creech,

What those are we call images of things,
Which, like thin films, from bodies rise in streams,
Play in the air, and dance upon the beams:
By day these meet, and strike our minds and fright;
And show pale ghosts and horrid shapes by night:
These break our sleep, these check our gay delight,
For sure no airy souls get loose, and fly
From Hell's dark shades, nor flutter in our sky:
For what remains, beyond the greedy Urn,
Since soul and body to their seeds return?
A stream of forms from every surface flows,
Which may be called the film or shell of those:
Because they bear the shape, they show the frame
And figure of the bodies whence they came.

About the middle of the seventeenth century the doctrine of Palingenesis prevailed. This was a chemical explanation of the theory of Lucretius. It asserted that if a flower were burnt and pulverised, a salt might be obtained which was the essential part of the flower; that on mixing this substance with something which

was not disclosed, and applying heat, a spectral flower would arise, corresponding to that which was burnt. This was explained by supposing that the particles of the salt, when heated, attracted one another, and flew off into the respective places they had occupied when in the living plant, so that they thus formed a shadowy representation of it. That being taken for an established fact, it was easy enough to apply it to the human body, which, when fermenting underground, threw off such particles of the essential salt to rise into the air, be drawn into their old relative positions, and thus form

horrid apparitions tall and ghastly,
To walk at dead of night, or take their stand
O'er some new-opened grave.

But why the winding-sheet threw off this salt, and not the coffin—for the ghosts always came up dressed in their grave-clothes, never cased in their coffins—Palingenecists have not explained.

Another theory, metaphysical, not chemical, made Fancy an incomprehensible material thing lodged in the middle lobe of the brain, which acts the part of a servant to the mind in arranging together the different material ideas brought to the brain by its other servants. The over-zealous industry of this servant in working after the others were gone to bed, was supposed to produce the appearance of spectres, which were thus taken to be, in a very literal sense, the workings of Fancy.

Now we come to the unwholesome class—the natural ghosts; ideas made unusually vivid by some morbid condition of the mind or body. Ghosts of this kind are as natural as those of the other class. Ideas are copies of sensations, only less intense. If any unhealthy excitement adds to the intensity, they may be indistinguishable from impressions of things actually seen and heard. The writer of this, having seen a large number of ghosts, and heard many ghostly voices in his childhood and youth, has, as a wise man once put it, seen too many ghosts to believe in them. And yet how clear and distinct they were. A long flaming sword, for example, in the air at noonday over London, at the time of the cholera visitation of 'thirty-one, or thereabouts; and not only a flaming sword, but the clouds arranged in a frame about it to bring out the picture, as they certainly were not really arranged in the sky. Bah! the pattern of the sword was that chosen by the artist of the first illustrated edition of *Paradise Lost*, whose pictures were often pored over by the young natural-ghost-seer; and it was a shape reflecting little credit on the genius of the heavenly swordsmiths, if they have swordsmiths in heaven.

Take the third experiment of Sir Humphrey Davy in an atmosphere of nitrous oxide. He says, "A thrilling, extending from the chest to the extremities, was almost immediately produced. I felt a sense of tangible extension, highly pleasurable, in every limb; my visible impressions were dazzling, and apparently magnified. I heard distinctly every sound in the room, and was perfectly aware of my situation.

By degrees, as the pleasurable sensation increased, I lost all connexion with external things; trains of vivid visible images rapidly passed through my mind, and were connected with words in such a manner as to produce perceptions perfectly novel. I existed in a world of newly connected and newly modified ideas. When I was awakened from this semi-delirious trance by Dr. Kinglake, who took the bag from my mouth, indignation and pride were the first feelings produced by the sight of the persons about me. My emotions were enthusiastic and sublime; and for a moment I walked round the room, perfectly regardless of what was said to me. As I recovered my former state of mind, I felt an inclination to communicate the discoveries I had made during the experiment. I endeavoured to recall the ideas—they were feeble and indistinct."

Inhalation of nitrous oxide increases fulness of the pulse, expands the blood. A like effect is produced by the febrile miasma of Cadiz, in which the spectral impressions are of a painful character. Suppose we say, then, that expansion of the blood is favourable to the producing of spectral impressions. If not that, some other fact as natural, accounts for the appearance of spectres in hectic and other fevers. The ghosts seen by Nicolai, the philosophical bookseller of Berlin, disappeared gradually on the application of leeches. Spectral impressions may result also from direct irritation of the brain, or from a high state of nervous irritability acting upon the body generally. The spectres will agree mostly with the mind they spring from. A philosophical man like Nicolai has visions of men, dogs, and horses, such as he would see in daily life. Others, who have their minds full of supernatural tales, and who associate with darkness, instead of nature's rest, the spirit's unrest, will see the sort of ghosts they occupy their minds with. Others, again, whose philosophy leads to a faith in visible intercourse between the living and the dead, will not fail to obtain excellent corroborations of their doctrine.

When supernatural forms are not repetitions of familiar shapes, but follow current superstitions, it has been always observed that they correspond to the forms adopted by popular belief from familiar paintings and sculptures. The witches of Lorraine, who professed to be familiar with devils, were questioned particularly as to the appearance of these devils by M. Rémy, the commissioner for their trial. They had simply realised them by the rude allegorical painting and sculpture of the middle ages. They said they were black-faced, with sunk but fiery eyes, their mouths wide and smelling of sulphur, their hands hairy, with claws, their feet horny and cloven. The cloven foot comes of a tradition that the devil was in the habit of appearing to the Jews in the form of a hairy goat. Saints, when they appear, correspond in the same way with the conventional form of church painting and sculpture. Visions seen in the ecstasies of saints themselves were commonly true visions; natural, as results of an overstrained mind in a wasted and often tortured body. *The visions seen by*

the dying may be explained also by the condition of the body in the last stage of many diseases, when the commonness of spectral delusions has given rise to a strong faith in our frequent visible communion with angels and departed spirits in the hour of death.

Next to sight, hearing is the sense most frequently imposed on, and no sound is so commonly imagined as the call of a familiar companion. Dr. Johnson fancied he heard his mother call "Sam," when she was a hundred miles away, and was much disappointed when nothing ensued. That call by a familiar voice was a frequent experience of the present writer. It was commonly a home voice, and a loud, clear, and abrupt monosyllabic call. But he has heard the voice of a brother miles away, speaking as from behind his shoulder in a college library, and turned to answer in a voice itself so insensibly subdued to harmony with the impression, as considerably to surprise a fellow-student who was standing near. But the delusions of hearing were, in his case, not confined to voices; the sound of opening doors within the bedroom at night, when there was no door opened, and other such tricks on the ear, were also not uncommon, but these (though not the sudden voices, which seemed to be connected with some momentary leap of the blood, as in the sensation that one has sometimes when going to sleep, of falling suddenly with a great jolt), were always to be explained by traceable relation to a thought within the mind.

Next to hearing, touch is said to be the sense most frequently imposed on; as when people have fancied themselves beaten by invisible or visible fiends, and felt considerable pain from it. The present writer can remember in his own ghostly experience but one delusion of the sense of touch. It was associated with delusion of hearing, and repeated nightly for a week or ten days. Sometimes the sense of smell is deceived, as when the spectral sight of a demon is joined to a spectral smell of brimstone. Considering how often people are saying that they "fancy they smell" something, one might think play upon this sense to be more common than it is. Least liable to delusion is said to be the sense of taste. Thus, a lunatic mentioned by Sir Walter Scott, fancied his porridge dinner to consist of every delicacy, but complained that everything he ate tasted of porridge.

THE PRINCESS YOLKA.

[THE following story, which, towards its close, somewhat resembles Cinderella, is based upon one of the popular tales of Esthonia (or Revel), the inhabitants of which province constitute a portion of the Finnish race. The egg, which may remind classical readers of the myth of Leda, connects it with the national Esthonian poem Kalewpoeg, lately brought to light by the Esthonian scholar, Dr. Krenzwald.]

A certain king, who, like many other potentates, lived once upon a time, was excessively annoyed by the circumstance that he had no direct heir to his throne, and his annoyance, in which the queen largely participated, was increased by the reflection that many of his poorer subjects were blessed with families so large that, viewing their scanty means, they did not highly appreciate the blessing. While the royal pair were together, they could console each other with reciprocal expressions of dissatisfaction; but on one occasion, when the king was absent on some foreign expedition, the queen, left to her own meditations, found her condition absolutely intolerable. There she sat in her garden day after day, under the shadow of a wide-spreading linden tree, her eyes filled with tears, looking so exceedingly dismal, that her maids of honour said confidentially to each other that she gave them the "horrors."

One day, however, raising her eyes from the ground, on which they were habitually fixed, she saw a little old woman hobbling along on a crutch, till she came to the neighbouring fountain, where, stooping with difficulty, she quenched her thirst. Gaining new strength from the refreshment, the diminutive hag then approached the linden tree, and cheerfully nodding her head, told the tearful queen that she had come to bring her good luck.

Now, in the modern work-a-day world we frequently find persons who, totally unable to manage their own affairs, show a marvellous degree of shrewdness in directing those of their neighbours. We have heard of a spirited gentleman who ran through three estates with unaccountable rapidity, and then, taking in hand the accounts of a society, which seemed to be involved in an insoluble tangle, brought them into the most perfect ship-shape. This financial feat performed, he ran through his fourth estate with a velocity far surpassing that exhibited on three previous occasions. A merchant who has been twice in the Gazette is not, on that account, deemed a whit less competent than any of his neighbours to write a pamphlet on the currency, showing how national bankruptcy may, without the slightest difficulty, be converted into national wealth. Facts like these, however, not having fallen within the sphere of the queen's observation, she felt doubtful of the old woman's ability to bestow good luck, when she obviously possessed so little for home consumption.

The old woman read her thoughts, and bade her not to be despondent, but to hold out her left hand and have her fortune told. Predicting good luck and bringing it are widely different functions, and the queen, aware that the gift of palmistry is frequently accompanied by extreme shabbiness of attire, made no difficulty in extending her hand as requested. Taking hold of the delicate finger-tips, the old woman, after tediously hemming and hawing over the lines on the queen's palm, at last spake thus:

"You have two causes of uneasiness. In the first place you are anxious about your absent husband, but with your majesty's good pleasure we'll set down that as nothing" (the queen bowed assent); "though I may as well tell you that within a fortnight the king will be at home again, looking as well as ever. But the grand truth is a total lack of olive-branches——"

The queen, pulling her hand a little, and deeply blushing, asked:

"Who are you, that can read the feelings of my heart in the palm of my hand?"

"That," retorted the old lady, sharply, "is my business. So, without asking any more irrelevant questions, you'll just have the goodness to listen to me, while I tell you how to get out of your present difficulty. Look here!"

So saying, she drew from her bosom a tiny bundle, which she gradually unwrapped, till she produced a small basket, which she gave to the queen, and then proceeded:

"In this basket you will find a bird's egg, which you will condescend to carry in your bosom for three months. When these are passed a very small child will be hatched——"

"Ridiculously small?" inquired the queen.

"About half the size of my little finger," explained the old woman. "Well, you will put this extremely small child, which, by the way, I cannot connect with anything ridiculous, in a basket of wool, which must always be kept in a warm place."

"And the ridicu—extremely small child is to be fed with——" the queen paused.

"Nothing," supplemented the old woman. "It will require neither food nor drink. Well, nine months after the birth of the extremely small child——"

"Birth?" objected the queen. "Shall we not rather say hatchment?"

"Say what you like, as long as you do

what I tell you," replied the old woman, pettishly. "Nine months after the hatching, as you elegantly phrase it, you will give birth to a son."

"Likewise ridicu—extremely small?" asked the queen.

"No, no, of the average size," answered the old woman; "and what is more, when this son is born, that extremely small child will be of the average size also. You will therefore take the latter out of the basket and place it in the cradle with the young prince, informing your royal husband that you have given birth to twins—a son and a daughter."

"Then the extremely small child will be female?" asked the queen.

"I thought I had said as much by implication," observed the old woman, with a shrug. "Please hear me out. You yourself will act as nurse to the boy——"

"My own child," interposed the queen.

"Of course; but for the girl you must engage another person. And mind, when the christening of the two children is about to take place, you will invite me to stand as the little girl's godmother."

"Your address?" said the queen, suggestively.

"Oh, you don't require an address," said the old woman. "All you have to do is to search the basket, at the bottom of which, underneath the wool, you will find a small feathery substance."

"What one might call a fluff?" suggested the queen.

"Yes—true—perhaps one might," was the reply. "Well, you will just blow this—ahem—fluff out of the window, and you will consider not only that I am invited, but also that I have accepted the invitation. Mind, not a word of what has passed to any living soul."

Without waiting for an answer, the old woman hobbled off, and before she had gone many steps, changed into a young woman, who trod the ground so lightly, that she seemed rather to fly than to walk. Was the apparition a mere dream? Certainly not. Though the old-young woman was gone, the tiny basket still remained in the hand of the queen, who took it home, folded it in a silk kerchief, and placed it in her bosom, feeling happier than she had felt for many a long day.

Just before a fortnight had elapsed the king came back with the glad tidings that he had thoroughly routed the enemy; and this accurate fulfilment of the old woman's first prediction increased the queen's confi-

dence in the second. A little gold case was made, which preserved the precious egg from even the possibility of danger; and in three months the miniature child was duly hatched, and put in the basket of wool to grow. A few months afterwards the son made his appearance, and the hatched child having thriven according to expectation, and being placed in the boy's cradle, the little fiction about the twins was accepted without hesitation, and the joy, not only of the court, but likewise of the land, was universal. When the day appointed for the christening arrived, the "fluff" was blown out of the window, and was answered by the appearance of a wonderfully fine chariot, drawn by six horses, yellow as the yolk of an egg, from which stepped a young lady, whose brilliant attire dazzled all beholders, and whose face, when she withdrew her veil, proved even more dazzling than her attire. In the arms of this glittering visitor the baby-girl was conveyed to the font, and at the request of her godmother was christened "Yolka"—a name which sounded odd to all except the queen; but she, remembering the egg, divined its hidden significance. An ordinary noble was the godfather of the boy, who received the ordinary name, William.

When the ceremony was over the sparkling godmother took an opportunity to whisper some good advice into the ear of the queen, enjoining her always to let the tiny basket lie by Yolka's side in the cradle, adding that as soon as the child was able to understand anything, the importance of always preserving this apparently insignificant treasure was to be deeply impressed on her mind. The sparkling godmother then took her leave, and those of the august assembly who ventured to inquire who she was, were quietly informed by the queen that she was a princess of her acquaintance, who lived a long way off; and that explanation was found, in every respect, satisfactory.

The two children thrived wonderfully, Yolka growing so exceedingly pretty, that, in the opinion of some wiseacres, she promised to be the very image of her godmother. Nay, the nurse told the queen, that sometimes at midnight a beautiful lady would unaccountably make her appearance, and look lovingly on the sleeping child, a piece of information which the queen gratefully received, at the same time delicately hinting that it had better not be carried further.

After the lapse of two years the calm happiness of the court was interrupted by the death of the queen, who in her last moments sent for Yolka's nurse, and placed in her hands the tiny basket, in which the fragments of the wonderful egg were still preserved.

"Observe this," she said; "it contains the future welfare of your young charge. When she is ten years old you will transfer it to her keeping, fully making her understand its importance. And, above all, never say a word on the subject to any one else."

"But with respect to the young prince?" said the nurse, with a fragmentary inquiry.

"Boys," replied the expiring queen, "are able to look after themselves."

"That's very true, your Majesty," observed the nurse, forgetting for a moment the solemnity of the occasion, and indulging in a chuckle, which was cut short by the entrance of the king.

"My beloved lord," said the queen. "Before I leave this world" (the king blew his nose), "I have a solemn request to make, which I trust you will not refuse——"

"What is it?" asked the king, looking anxious.

"In the name of all you love and revere, I implore you to allow little Yolka——"

"Our little Yolka," interposed the king.

"Little Yolka," repeated the queen, dexterously avoiding the pronoun. "You will allow her, when she is too old for a nurse, still to retain in her service the excellent person who now acts in that capacity."

"Most certainly," ejaculated the king, feeling his mind infinitely relieved. "My only wonder is that you should be so emphatic in soliciting such a mere trifle. But every one knows his own business best."

Years passed away. The good queen was dead, and the king had taken unto himself another wife, who, on principle, hated the two children, and made herself so exceedingly unpleasant that the king, hoping, at his advanced age, to enjoy occasionally a quiet home, removed them to a distance from the palace, under the charge of their ever-faithful nurse. Sometimes they would accidentally come across the new queen, but so great a storm was invariably the result of such encounters, and the royal lady had so confirmed a habit of *repelling unwelcome objects* with her foot,

that they instinctively avoided all chance of collision.

When Yolka had reached the tenth anniversary of her nominal birthday, the nurse placed in her hands the wonderful basket, exhorting her to take care of it, with a solemnity that by no means produced the desired result. A tiny basket could scarcely appear precious in the eyes of a heedless child; so she tossed the treasure into a box where she usually kept her toys.

About two years afterwards, when the king was out of the way, the perverse queen, strolling in the garden, found Yolka sitting under a linden tree, and the consequence of the discovery was a box on the ears, administered so smartly that, to the dazzled eyes of the poor girl, the world became one vast kaleidoscope. When she had reached her own room, she began to bethink herself of the neglected basket, and to wonder whether it would prevent the recurrence of a similar infliction. So she looked it up, but, finding that it contained nothing but a broken egg-shell, and what her supposed parent had called a "fluff," she pitched the rubbish out of window.

Fortunately the wind caught the fluff, which had lost none of its inviting properties, and a wonderfully beautiful and sparkling lady stood before the astonished Yolka. Had she ever seen a pantomime, she would have expected to be changed into columbine; but pantomimes, in her days, were not invented.

"Do not, my beloved child," said the lady, in very stately style—"do not feel in the slightest degree intimidated by the sudden manner, certainly unusual, in which I make my appearance. I am your god-mother, and the best friend you have in the world. From the swollen condition of your eyelids, I could easily infer that your existence is far from happy; but I stand in need of no such indications, since, by a process unnecessary to explain, I know the condition of everybody in general, and of you in particular. That, indeed, is my idiosyncrasy. At present, let me exhort you to endure your troubles bravely, since, take my word for it, they will soon come to a close, and vanish like the mirage. When you have reached the years of maturity, your stepmother, as you, perchance not quite accurately, call her, will have lost all power of controlling you, and no one else will be able to injure you: provided, that is, you take care of the minute basket, and do not lose sight of the shells. For, lo! a day will come when the fragments will

unite, and form an unbroken egg once more. Then will days of happiness be at hand. In the meanwhile, make a small silken bag, as a case for the basket, and wear it constantly in your bosom; for, if this precaution be adopted, neither your stepmother, nor indeed any one else, will be capable of doing you harm. However, should any unforeseen mischance arise, just take the small feathery substance out of the basket, and blow it into the air. My appearance will be instantaneous, and to assist you will be my object. We will now take a turn into the garden, where, seated under the branches of the linden tree, we can have a little further talk."

Astounded at this uninterrupted flow of words, Yolka thought that her godmother had talked enough for a month, but as she would not offend so kind a benefactress, she accompanied her into the garden, where another flow of speech commenced and lasted till nightfall. The godmother then uttered a few mysterious words over the basket, and a table laden with delicate viands rose from the ground as a substantial supplement to the feast of reason. After they had partaken of the repast they returned to the palace, and on their way, the godmother communicated to Yolka the mysterious words which had been uttered over the basket, and which, of course, we should not feel justified in communicating to the reader. The basket too, as was afterwards proved, had a manifest effect upon the queen's temper, since Yolka, from the time she wore it, was scarcely ever vexed by a cross word.

Again years passed away, and Yolka, a fine girl in her advanced teens was so exceedingly beautiful, that the young generation declared nothing so lovely had ever been seen; while the old and middle-aged vowed that nobody could be compared with her, except her godmother, whose appearance at the christening had never been forgotten. A war, resulting in a siege of the city where the king resided, and a scarcity of provisions, recently caused people to think of other matters, and the royal larder being nearly exhausted, even Yolka herself forgot to look into her own mirror. Under these distressing circumstances she blew the fluff into the air and besought her godmother, who immediately appeared, to tell her, briefly if possible, how the grand misery could be alleviated.

"My dearest child," commenced the brilliant godmother, "the virtues of that

basket are not transferable. I see you do not apprehend my meaning. Let me, therefore, dilate. When I say that the virtues of the basket are not transferable, I mean that they are only available to you yourself. Indeed, if we beings of a superior order assisted everybody in trouble, as a matter of course, we should have enough work upon our hands. You, as you ought to be aware, are a peculiarly favoured personage—do not ask why—and you, therefore, I will assist. As for the others, they must manage as well as they can."

So saying, the glittering godmother led Yolka out of the city, rendering her invisible to the eyes of the besieging soldiers, and proceeded to a quiet spot, where she presented her with the dress of a peasant girl, and so altered her features (not for the better) that she could not have been recognised by her most intimate friends. If she wished to regain her lost good looks she was to use the power of the basket.

Yolka had not left the city an hour too soon, for on the following day it was taken by storm, and all sorts of horrors ensued. The king and all the members of the royal family and all the nobility were made prisoners, with the exception of lucky Prince William, who got out of the way, and the unlucky queen, who was killed by a spear in the general tumult. Moreover, the ruthless foes so devastated the surrounding country, that for whole days Yolka wandered from place to place unable to find a sheltering roof, though her "board," as we should now say, was liberally supplied by the basket. At last she came to a farm, where she was hired as a servant, and though she at first found the work too hard, she became, in three days, so handy and active that no drudgery was too much for her strength. Soon her condition improved. While one morning she was scouring her milk-pails in the yard, a fine lady passed in her carriage, and with the consent of the farmer engaged Yolka as her "own maid."

After she had been half-a-year in her new place at the lady's country seat, where she had nothing to do but to set the room straight and to attend to the duties of the toilette, news arrived to the effect that Prince William had raised an army and recovered the kingdom, of which he was now the rightful sovereign, as his father had died in captivity. When the year of mourning had expired, a proclamation went forth, after the good old fashion, to the effect that the

young king was about to take unto himself a wife, and that he invited all the young ladies far and near to assemble at a grand festival to be held in his palace, that he might have ample opportunity to make a suitable choice. The three daughters of Yolka's mistress were only too glad to accept, and for some weeks the damsel's work in fitting up the ladies for the festival was nearly as hard as the toil at the farmhouse. But she was consoled every night by her brilliant godmother, who visited her in her dreams, and who, while she charged her to do her duty in dressing the young ladies, urged her to follow them to the ball, where she would outshine all present. Accordingly, when the mother and daughters had taken their departure, Yolka held private discourse with her basket. Would that all discourse led to such practical benefit. Wonderfully fine garments, after the fashion set by her godmother, lay upon the bed; her own features came back again as soon as she had washed her face, and when she looked at the glass, she found that she was literally a fright; for she was frightened out of her wits by her own surprising beauty. Down the steps she floated, and at the bottom of the steps was a carriage drawn by four horses, yellow as the yolk of an egg, and off she went with the speed of lightning. But when she reached the palace of the king, she found to her horror that she had left the basket behind! What was to be done? Should she go all the way back?

Do not be needlessly excited, gentle reader. Nothing important came of this little incident, which is only intended to cause a gentle twitter. While Yolka was hesitating, the politest of swallows appeared at the window of the carriage with the basket in its beak, which was duly and gratefully received.

Need we dwell on the buzz of admiration that arose when Yolka entered the hall, or the rapture of King William, or the comments of the old folk, who remembered the brilliant godmother, and declared that the new-comer was a chip of that exquisite block? No! We will hurry on to midnight, when the hall was wrapped with a gauzy fog, which, gradually dispersing, revealed the brilliant godmother.

As usual, that august lady prepared herself for tall talk.

"The young person," she said, "who has made an impression deep, but not unaccountable, in the assembly, more particularly upon our royal host, and who is so uncommonly like me, was once wrongly supposed to be his sister; but the hypothesis was incorrect. She is the grand-daughter of a king, whose realm is separated from this by a distance of several million miles, and I had the honour of dissolving the spell which a fell enchanter had cast upon the princess, her mother. The best thing you can do, King William, is to put the other young ladies out of their misery, by marrying the lovely Yolka—that is her name—without delay."

"I will!" exclaimed King William, with delight.

Then came a clap of thunder, and the brilliant godmother was gone.

"Look here," said an old courtier to his neighbour. "That story about the enchanted princess is all very well for younger heads than ours, and some greenhorns may believe in the several million miles. But if the lady who came in the fog isn't the mamma of the lady who came in the carriage, I'm a Dutchman."

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VERONICA.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE."
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BOOK I.

CHAPTER X. THE GAUNTLET.

SIR JOHN GALE, after his first appearance in the vicar's parlour, came daily to sit there.

His afternoon visit became an established custom, and, after the second time, it seemed as though he had been familiar there for years.

He grew stronger very quickly. It was not long before he began to speak of departing. There seemed, indeed, to be no valid reason why he should linger at the vicarage. And yet he stayed on.

"I shall go abroad as soon as we have some assurance of milder weather," he said to Mr. Levincourt. "Spring is delicious in Italy. I shall wait, however, until I hear that the Alps are not too impassable; for, of all things, I detest a sea voyage, and the two hours in the Channel are always worse to me than a week's land travelling. Meanwhile——"

"Meanwhile, why not remain here?" said the vicar. "There is no need for you to make a move until you set off for the south."

To this, Sir John Gale replied that his intrusion at Shipley vicarage had already been long enough; that he should never forget his host's kindness, but it behoved him not to trespass on it too far; that, although he certainly had no ties of friendship or relationship which specially claimed his presence just then, in any other part of England, he must nevertheless make up his mind to say farewell to Shipley as soon as

the doctor's permission to travel could be obtained.

All this, and more to the same purpose, said Sir John Gale. And yet he lingered on.

The spring set in early, after a severe winter. By the beginning of April, there came soft, bright days, with a southerly breeze which tempted the inmates of the vicarage forth from the house.

Some such days immediately followed the dinner-party at Mrs. Sheardown's.

One afternoon, Sir John, beholding from his chamber window, Miss Levincourt strolling in the garden, presently ventured forth to join her.

"May I walk here, Miss Levincourt?" he asked, pausing at the threshold of the glass-door that led into the garden.

"O, by all means. But is it sunny enough here? The evergreens give a very damp shade. If you are not afraid to venture further, you would have more warmth and a southern aspect, there, beyond the gate."

So Veronica and her father's guest wandered slowly on and on, looking out over the common dappled with cloud shadows, gazing at the far, hazy horizon, pausing now and again for a moment, but still proceeding in their course until they reached the churchyard of St. Gildas.

Sir John declared that the balmy air was a cordial that did him more good than any medicines. Still, warm as it was for the season, he dared not sit in the churchyard to rest, and, as he turned to go back, he was evidently tired.

A frown darkened his face. "I ought not to have come so far without Paul," he said. "I am still so dev—so unaccountably weak."

"It is my fault," exclaimed Veronica.

"Let me be Paul's substitute." She offered Sir John the support of her arm with perfect tact and self-possession, as though it were the most natural and ordinary proceeding in the world.

After that occasion the daily walk became a matter of course.

The temporary absence of Miss Desmond from the vicarage was by no means regretted by Sir John. In truth, he did not like Maud. Some word to that effect escaped him in speaking to Veronica.

"You must not say that to papa, Sir John," said she, looking quietly up at him.

"Say what?"

"That you do not like Miss Desmond."

"Of course not. I never said so to any one. It would be untrue. Miss Desmond is a very charming young lady, very charming and very young, and perhaps her youth explains a slight touch, the very slightest touch, of—of self-sufficiency. We grow tolerant and sceptical as we get older. Hélas!"

"Maud is not self-sufficient. She is only very earnest and very honest."

"Miss Desmond is happy in having so warm and generous a friend. And pray do not accuse me of any want of respect for Miss Desmond. I have no doubt that she possesses the most admirable qualities; only her manner is a little—a little hard and chilly, if I may venture to say so."

"At heart she is really very impulsive."

"Is she?"

"But she has great self-command in general."

"I am bound to say that she must have. Anything less impulsive than Miss Desmond's manner I have seldom seen. But forgive me. I will not say another word that shall even seem like disparagement of one for whom *you* entertain so warm an affection."

Sir John spoke with a winning deferential softness of manner, and looked with undisguised admiration into the beautiful face by his side.

Such looks were now not rare on his part. Veronica, in her retrospective meditations, could recal many such glances; could recal, too, many soft words, so soft as to be almost tender, spoken in her ear during the afternoon stroll in meadow or garden. She was flattered and touched by the deference towards herself of this man, whose character she perceived to be imperious, almost arrogant, to the rest of the world.

Others had been admiring and deferen-

tial before now. Mr. Plew would endure her scornful raillery with abject submission; but then Mr. Plew was habitually submissive to every one, and was, after all (she reflected), a very insignificant individual indeed.

That young man, that Mr. Lockwood, the other evening had shown himself very sensible to the fascinations of her brightness and her beauty. He was not abject, truly. No; he was manly and modest, and he looked, and spoke, and moved in a way which showed that he thought himself the equal of any one among Captain Sheardown's guests. Nevertheless, in Veronica's apprehension, he was not so. Although she had chosen to put down Emma Begbie's ill-breeding, she had been, to a certain degree, mortified by her contemptuous tone.

Sir John Gale was a different kind of person from this young Lockwood, whose father had been educated by the bounty of Admiral Sheardown.

To be "my Lady Gale"!

The words rang in her ears. She whispered them to herself in the solitude of her chamber. Wealth, station, and all that was alluring to the girl's vanity and ambition, were in the sound.

In those earliest years of existence during which, as some think, the deepest and most abiding impressions are made on the character, the ideal of happiness held up before Veronica's eyes was an essentially ignoble one. The possession of such delights as may be summed up in the vulgar word "finery" she was directly or indirectly taught to look upon as an aim to be attained. As she grew older, and the life that lay before her in Shipley-in-the-Wold became clear to her apprehension, an eating discontent took hold upon her like a slow poison. At times, in recalling her mother's stories of her young days in Florence, a passion of envy and longing would make the girl's heart sick within her. Not that those things which had made Stella Barletti gay and happy would have altogether satisfied her daughter. The latter had more pride and less simplicity. Stella liked to "far figura," as the Italian phrase goes: to make a figure, in the world. But her ambition never soared on a very daring wing. She was perfectly contented to accept Russian hospodaressees laden with emeralds, or even Princesses Della Scatoli da Salsa, crowned with paste diamonds and enamelled with effrontery, as her social superiors, and to enjoy the spectacle of their real or sham splendours exactly as

she enjoyed the spangles and tinsel of the ballet in carnival.

Not so Veronica. She would willingly be second to none. There were moments when the chance mention of Maud Desmond's family, or an allusion to the glories of the ancestral mansion at Delaney, made her sore and jealous. She would even be rendered irritably impatient by Maud's simple indifference on the score of her ancestry: though the least display of pride of birth on the part of her father's ward would have been intolerable to Veronica's haughty spirit.

Yet Veronica was no monster of selfish consistency. She was often visited by better impulses and a longing for a nobler aim in life. But the first shock of practical effort and self-denial repulsed her like a douche of ice-cold water. There came no reaction, no after-glow, and she shrank back shivering, with a piteous cry of, "I cannot be good."

She knew herself to be wretchedly dissatisfied. And, although her youth and bodily health at intervals asserted their elasticity, and broke forth into a wild flow of gaiety and good spirits, she was yet, at nineteen years old, secretly consumed by dreary discontent.

Then she told herself that it was easy for happy people to be good. "If I were but happy, I should be good, and kind, and generous," she said.

And latterly the thought had taken possession of her that it would make her happy to become my Lady Gale.

Opportunity is the divinity which shapes the ends of most love affairs, let them be rough-hewn how they will. Under the favouring influence of residence beneath the same roof, daily walks together, and evenings spent in each other's society, the intimacy between the vicar's daughter and the stranger sojourning in her father's house grew rapidly. The disparity of age between them offered no obstacle to the familiarity of their intercourse.

There are some men who accept the advance of age, and even make a step to meet it; there are others who painfully and eagerly fend it off; again, there are some who simply ignore it. To this latter category belonged Sir John Gale. You could not say that he indulged in any undue affectation of juvenility. He merely seemed to take it for granted that such affectation would have been entirely superfluous.

From the first moment of seeing Veronica

he had been struck by her remarkable beauty. And not her least attraction in his eyes, was the contrast between her character and her position.

"Who the deuce would have dreamed of finding such a girl as that, in an English country parsonage!" he said to himself.

In their conversations together, Veronica had spoken of her mother's early life, and had not attempted to conceal her own longing to quit Shipley-in-the-Wold, and Dane-shire altogether, for other and brighter scenes. He had noted, with a sort of cynical good-humour, the girl's aspiration after wealth and display; her restless discontent with the obscurity of the vicarage; the love of admiration which it required no very acute penetration to discover in her. But these traits of character were by no means distasteful to Sir John. Coupled with a plain face, or an awkward manner, they would have—not disgusted, so much as—bored him. United to rare beauty, and a quick intelligence, they amused and attracted him. And then, to complete the spell, came that crowning charm without which all the rest would have wasted their sweetness on Sir John Gale; the fact that this young, brilliant, and beautiful girl, desired very unmistakably to be pleasing in his eyes.

If she be not fair for me,
What care I how fair she be?

might have been said, and said truly, by the baronet, respecting the loveliest woman ever cast in mortal mould. Time and self-indulgence, in proportion as they had indurated his heart, had rendered his egotism more and more keenly sensitive.

It gratified his egotism to be, from whatever cause, an object of attention to Veronica. He cared not to ask himself whether she would have lowered her beautiful eyes to regard him for an instant, had he been poor and obscure. His wealth and his rank were part of himself; inseparable from that Capital I, which filled up for him so large a space in God's universe.

"The girl would make a furore if she were known," he said to himself. "Her colouring, hair, and eyes, are perfect. And she has spirit enough for Lucifer!"

Nevertheless he had not gauged the height of Veronica's ambition.

Day by day, and hour by hour, the attraction exercised over him by her beauty, grew stronger.

"You are not such a votary of Mrs. Grundy as your friend," he said to her one day.

"As Maud?" answered Veronica, laugh-

ing. Then she continued, with a disdainful toss of her head, "No, truly; I suppose my Italian blood renders me incapable of worshipping at that shrine. Dio mio! Life is so short! And so little sweet! Why embitter it voluntarily with Mrs. Grundy?"

"Yet in your heart—confess now—you are a little afraid of her?"

"I might answer you as you answered Maud: am I a pickpocket to be afraid of the policeman?"

"Miss Desmond's retort did not hit the case. The policeman merely administers laws: Mrs. Grundy makes them."

"She shall make none for me," said Veronica, looking very handsome in her scorn.

Sir John gazed upon her curiously; but he said no more at that time. The subject, however, seemed to have a peculiar attraction for him, and he returned to it frequently.

On the Friday morning preceding the Sunday fixed for Maud's return home, there came a letter to the vicar from his ward. The purport of it was, to ask his leave to stay a short time longer at Lowater House. There was to be a concert at Danecester, to which Mrs. Sheardown had promised to take her. At the end of the letter were a few words about Hugh Lockwood.

"Do you know, Uncle Charles," wrote Maud, "that Mr. Lockwood knows my Aunt Hilda? He heard accidentally that I was a niece of Lady Tallis, and he then mentioned that he and his mother had made her acquaintance at a watering-place three or four years ago; and that Mrs. Lockwood and my aunt became quite intimate. They have not seen her for a long time; but she promised to let them know, whenever she came to London. I cannot have seen Aunt Hilda since I was seven years old, when she came one day to see poor mamma; yet my recollection of her is a correct one, for Mr. Lockwood describes her as a small slight woman with delicate features and beautiful eyes. This is just what I remember. Only he says she is now sadly faded."

"Dear me!" said the vicar, "odd enough that these Lockwoods should have come across Lady Tallis! Here is a postscript for you, Veronica, asking you to send back some dress or other by Captain Sheardown's man. See to it, will you?" Then the vicar, having handed his daughter the letter, went away to his study.

Veronica read the letter from beginning to end. She read it more than once. There was a good deal in it about that Hugh Lockwood, she thought. She remembered what Miss Begbie had said about him, and her lip curled. She care for the attentions of such a one as Mr. Hugh Lockwood! Emma Begbie should change her tone some day. *Pazienza!*

Veronica got together the articles for which Maud had asked, and as she did so, she scarcely knew whether she were glad or sorry that Maud was going to remain a while longer at Lowater House.

"Dear old Maudie! I hope she will enjoy herself." Then she wondered what Maud would say to her daily walk with Sir John Gale, and whether Maud would perceive the growing devotion of his manner towards herself. And then she looked in the glass with a triumphant smile. But in a moment the blood rushed up to her brow, and she turned away impatiently. Was she afraid in her secret heart, as Sir John had said? No: not afraid of the gossiping malice of the world: not afraid of Mrs. Grundy. But she had a latent dread of Maud's judgment. Maud had such a lofty standard, such a pure ideal. Bah! People all wished to be happy; all strove and struggled for it. She, Veronica, was at least honest to herself. She did not gild her motives with any fine names. She longed to be happy in her own way, instead of pretending to be happy in other people's way.

That very afternoon, Sir John Gale announced that Mr. Plew had told him he might quite safely venture to travel. He made the communication to Veronica as they stood side by side leaning over the low wall of St. Gildas's churchyard, and looking at the moss-grown graves, all velvety and mellow under the slanting rays of the declining sun.

"Mr. Plew was very hard and cruel," said Sir John in a low voice. "Very hard and inexorable. I tried to hint to him that my strength was not yet sufficiently recovered to render my taking a journey, a safe experiment. But it was in vain. Was he not cruel?"

Veronica stood still and silent, supporting her elbow on the low wall of the graveyard, and leaning her cheek on her hand.

"Was he not cruel, Veronica?"

His voice sank to a whisper as he uttered her name, and drawing nearer, he took the unoccupied hand that hung listlessly by her side.

Her heart beat quickly; a hundred thoughts seemed to whirl confusedly through her brain. But she stood immovably steady, with her eyes still turned toward the green graveyard.

"I—I don't know. I suppose—I should think not. You ought to be glad to be well enough to go away."

He drew yet nearer, and pressed the hand that lay passive in his clasp.

"You think it natural to be glad to leave Shipley?"

"Very natural."

"You hate this place and this life. I have seen how uncongenial all your surroundings are to you. You are like some bright tropical bird carried away from his native sunshine, and caged under a leaden sky. Leave it, and fly away into the sunshine!"

"That is easily said!"

"You are not angry?" he asked, eagerly, as she made a move to walk back towards the house.

"Why should I be angry? But the sun is sinking fast, and papa will expect me. We had better return to the house."

"Stay yet an instant! This may be our last walk together. What would papa do, if you did not return home at all?"

"Really I do not see the use of discussing so absurd a hypothesis."

"Not at all absurd. It must happen some day."

"There is Catherine at the gate, looking for us. I must go back."

"Ah, Veronica, you *are* angry with me!"

"No."

"Then it is the shadow of Mrs. Grundy that has darkened your face. Why does she come between poor mortals and the sunshine?"

"Nonsense!"

"I told you that you were afraid of Mrs. Grundy in your heart."

"And I told you that you were mistaken."

They had been walking towards the house, side by side, but apart, and had by this time reached the little iron wicket which gave access to the lawn. Here Sir John paused, and said, softly: "Well, I have been obedient. I have come home; or rather, you came, and I followed. Perhaps there was no great merit in that. But, Veronica, if you are not angry that I have dared to call you so, give me a token of forgiveness."

"I have told you that I am not angry."

"Yes; but you say so with your face turned away. Not one look? See—that glove that you are pulling off—give me that."

"Pray, Sir John!" murmured Veronica, hurrying up the gravel path, "I request that you will not touch my hand. The servant is there, within sight."

"The glove, then! Fling it down as a gage of defiance to Mrs. Grundy, if you refuse to give it as a token of pardon to me!"

She ran past him quickly, up the steps and into the house.

As she entered it, a little brown glove fluttered in the air, and fell at the feet of Sir John Gale.

THE SECOND OF SEPTEMBER.

CHRONICLERS and calendar-makers tell us that the second of September was marked by the births of St. Justus and St. Margaret, of William of Roschild and Stephen of Hungary, and of Howard the philanthropist; by the deaths of General Moreau, the hapless Princess of Lamballe, Alice Lisle, and the Lady Mary Hervey, celebrated for her wit and beauty at the court of George the Second. But a much more important and exciting event marks this date. The GREAT FIRE (it deserves capital letters) of London, burst out on the second of September, 1666. There is in existence a record of this catastrophe, ferreted out no longer than three years ago, corroborative in its main features of the older narratives. We all know the leading particulars; how the fire began at ten o'clock at night, at a baker's house in Pudding-lane; how it raged for three days and nights; how it swept away nearly everything from the Tower to the Old Bailey; how it destroyed something like twelve thousand houses, besides churches, the Cathedral of St. Paul's, the Royal Exchange, hospitals, public halls, and institutions in great number. All this we know from the narratives by Evelyn and other writers. An interesting confirmation of those narratives has been recently brought to light. In 1866 Mrs. Everett Green, while making researches at the Record Office, discovered a letter which had been addressed to Viscount Conway in September, 1666. The name of the writer does not appear, but internal evidence shows him to have been some kind of confidential agent to the viscount, having a certain control over said viscount's town residence in Queen-street, Cheapside. The letter gives an account of the dreadful fire, quite consistent with the narratives already known. Three passages we will quote.

Of the panic which seized the citizens generally, the writer says: "So great was the general despair, that when the fire was at the Temple, houses in the Strand adjoining to

Somerset House were blown up on purpose to save that house; and all men, both in city and suburbs, carried away their goods all day and night by carts, which were not to be had but at most inhumane prices. Your lordship's servant in Queen-street made a shift to put some of your best chairs and fine goods into your rich coach, and sent for my horses to draw them to Kensington, where they now are."

The writer gives Charles the Second credit for spirit and courage on this occasion. Very likely, ardent loyalty coloured the picture; but let us give the king the benefit of it so far as it goes: "Tis fit your lordship should know all that is left, both of city and suburbs, is acknowledged (under God) to be wholly due to the king and the Duke of York,* who, when the citizens had abandoned all further care of the place, and were intent chiefly upon the preservation of their goods, undertook the work themselves, and, with incredible magnanimity, rode up and down, giving orders for blowing up of houses with gunpowder, to make void spaces for the fire to die in, and standing still to see their orders executed, exposing their persons to the very flames themselves and the ruins of buildings ready to fall upon them, and sometimes labouring with their own hands to give example to others, for which the people do now pay them, as they ought to do, all possible reverence and admiration. The king proceeds to relieve daily all the poor people with infinite quantities of bread and cheese."

A very terrible state of feeling agitated the public mind at the time, arising from doubts concerning the cause of the Great Fire. Multitudes of persons insisted on believing that the catastrophe was the result of design, not accident. The writer of the letter alludes to this subject in the following sensible way: "Without doubt there was nothing of plot or design in all this, though the people would fain think it otherwise. Some lay it upon the French or Dutch, and are ready to knock them all on the head wheresoever they meet them; others upon the fanatics, because it broke out so near the third of September, their so celebrated day of triumph;† others upon the Papists, because some of them are now said to be accused. All the stories of making and casting of fire-balls are found to be fictitious when traced home; for that which was said to be thrown upon Dorset House was a firebrand [burning billet] seen by the Duke of York upon the Thames to be blown thither; and upon notice thereof given by his royal highness, was for that time quenched. But there could be no plot without some time to form it in; and making so many parties to it, we must needs have had some kind of intelligence of it. Besides, no rising follows it, nor any one appears anywhere to second such a design.

* Afterwards James the Second.

† The Parliamentarians won the battle of Dunbar on the third of September, 1650, and the battle of Worcester on the third of September, 1651.

Above all, there hath been no attempt upon the king or duke's person, which easily might have been executed."

The suspicions connected with the Great Fire form a chapter very little known except to those who have read the political pamphlets of that day. William Lilly, the astrologer, was much mixed up with the discussion: he having been one of the persons examined by a parliamentary committee touching the cause of the dire calamity. There can be very little doubt that Lilly was a crafty knave, who traded on the credulity of those around him. He had, during many years, been applied to for his aid, by persons who, in reference to birth and education, ought to have been superior to such follies. On one occasion, the authorities of Westminster Abbey requested him to try, by means of the "Mosaical rods" (divining rods) whether or not there was valuable treasure hidden beneath the abbey. During the struggles between Charles the First and his parliament, both parties had applied to Lilly—the Royalists to tell them whether the king ought to sign the propositions of the parliament, the Parliamentarians to furnish them with "perfect knowledge of the chiefest concerns of France." Such a man was pretty sure to make a harvest out of such clients. For six-and-thirty years continuously, Lilly published an almanac, the predictions of which were sought for with so much avidity that he amassed considerable wealth. Like the Vicar of Bray, he changed his opinions to suit the changes in public affairs, and seems fully to have deserved the character given to him by Dr. Nash, of being a "time-serving rascal."

A committee of the House of Commons was appointed on the twenty-fifth of September, to collect evidence bearing on the subject of the Fire. The Report of the Proceedings* is very curious, showing that the members of the committee were ready to receive any evidence, however trivial or doubtful, which might tend to show that the Fire had been the work of incendiaries. Let us cull a few specimens.

"Mr. Light, of Ratcliff, having some discourse with Mr. Longhorn of the Middle Temple, barrister (reputed a zealous papist), about February, 1665, after some discourse in disputation about religion, he took him by the hand and said to him, 'You expect great things in 'sixty-six, and think that Rome will be destroyed; but what if it be London?'"

"Miss Elizabeth Styles informs: That in April last, in an eager discourse she had with a French servant of Sir Vere Fane, he hastily replied: 'You English maids will like the Frenchmen better when there is not a house left between Temple Bar and London Bridge.' To which she answered, 'I hope your eyes will never see that.' He replied, 'This will come to pass between June and October.'"

* The Report of Sir Robert Brook, chairman to the committee that was appointed by the House of Commons to inquire into the firing of the City of London.

"Newton Killingworth, Esquire, informs: That he had apprehended a person during the Fire, about whom he found much combustible matter, and certain black things of a long figure, which he could not endure to hold in his hand by reason of their extreme heat. This person was so surprised at first, that he would not answer to any question; but being on his way to Whitehall, he acted the part of a madman, and so continued while he was with him."

"Mr. Richard Harwood informs: That being near the Feathers Tavern, by St. Paul's, upon the fourth of September, he saw something through a grate in a cellar, like wildfire; by the sparkling and spitting of it he could judge it to be no other." But this was rather lame evidence, relating to a date two days after the breaking out of the fire.

"A letter directed and sent by the post to Mr. Samuel Thurlton, in Leicestershire, from a person unknown, as followeth, dated October sixteen, 1666: 'Your presence is now more necessary at London than where you are, that you may determine how to dispose of your estate in Southwark. For it is determined by Human Counsel (if not frustrated by Divine Power) that the suburbs will shortly be destroyed. Your capacity is large enough to understand. Proceed as your genius shall instruct you—*Cave: Fuge: Vale!*'"

Another bit of evidence was to the following effect: "A maid was taken in the street with two fire-balls in her lap. Some did demand of her 'Where she had had them?' She said one of the king's life-guard throw them into her lap. She was asked why she had not caused him to be apprehended? She said that she knew not what they were. She was indicted for this, and the bill found against her, and turned over to the Old Bailey; but no prosecution upon it."

Lilly's examination was due to a book which he had published some years before, under the title of *Monarchy or no Monarchy*, and which contained, among other hieroglyphics, a representation of a city in flames. Some of the members of the committee, remembering this picture, caused him to be sent for. Sir Robert Brook, chairman of the committee, said to him: "Mr. Lilly, this committee thought fit to summon you to appear before them this day, to know if you can say anything as to the cause of the late Fire, or whether there might be any design therein. You are called the rather hither, because in a book of yours long since printed, you hinted some such thing by one of your hieroglyphics." Lilly was accompanied by Elias Ashmole, to keep up his courage; and he replied thus: "May it please your honour, after the death of the late king, considering that in the three subsequent years the parliament acted nothing which concerned the settlement of the nation in peace; and seeing the generality of people dissatisfied, the citizens of London discontented, the soldiers prone to mutiny, I was desirous, according to the best knowledge God

had given me, to make inquiry by the art I studied, what might from that time happen unto the parliament and nation in general. At last, having satisfied myself as well as I could, and perfected my judgment thereon, I thought it most convenient to signify my intentions and conceptions thereof in forms, shapes, types, hieroglyphics, &c., without any commentary; so that my judgment might be concealed from the vulgar, and made manifest only unto the wise. I herein imitated the examples of many wise philosophers who hath done the like."

The rogue! He made his hieroglyphics alarming enough to cause the book to sell, and then left every one to interpret the pictures according to taste. We have not even yet quite seen the last of that class of almanac-makers!

Lilly proceeded: "Having found, sir, that the City of London should be sadly afflicted with a great plague, and not long after with an exorbitant fire, I framed these two hieroglyphics as represented in the book, which in effect have proved very true."

"Did you foresee the year?" asked a member of the committee.

"I did not, nor was desirous: of that I made no surety. Whether there was any design of burning the city, or any employed to that purpose, I must deal ingenuously with you, that since the Fire I have taken much pains in the search thereof, but cannot or could not give myself any the least satisfaction therein. I conclude that it was alone the finger of God; but what instruments he used thereunto I am ignorant."

It is impossible not to see the cunning with which Lilly managed his replies: feeling the popular belief in his prophetic powers, and yet keeping himself free from dangerous suspicions concerning the Great Fire.

The upshot, in Lilly's own words, was: "The committee seemed well pleased with what I spoke, and dismissed me with great civility." No other witness gave evidence of any value; and the nation settled down gradually into a belief that the conflagration of the second of September was purely accidental.

AS THE CROW FLIES.

DUE SOUTH. EPSOM TO BOX HILL.

DURDANS (the seat of the Heatcotes) was built by Lord Berkeley from the ruins of Nonesuch, and very full of old memorials the place is. Pepys mentions (Sept. 16, 1660) going to St. James's to see the Duke of York, on Admiralty business, and finding him starting with the king, queen, and Prince Rupert, to dine at Durdans. Evelyn, too, mentions, in his quiet, amiable way, going to Durdans, in 1665, and finding an assembly of savans—Dr. Wilkins, Sir William Petty, and Mr. Hooke—"contriving chariots, new rigging for ships," and of all things in the world—what was no doubt a sort of bicycle—"a wheel to run races in." He adds: "perhaps three such

persons together were not found elsewhere in Europe for parts and ingenuity." Wilkins was the man who tried to establish a universal language, and so nullify the fatal curse of Babel; Hooke was an astronomer, who was jealous of Newton, and claimed to have discovered the law of gravitation; and Petty was one of the most active founders of the Royal Society.

The great days of Durdans were when Frederick, Prince of Wales, the son of George the Second, came to reside there. It was this patron of dancing-masters and toadies who first gave rise to the saying, "That whether there was peace or war abroad, there was sure to be family discord among the Guelphs." His sisters despised him; his strutting, little, demoralised father pronounced him a puppy, fool, and scoundrel; his mother cursed the hour in which he was born; and the prime minister described him as a poor, weak, irresolute, false, lying, dishonest, contemptible wretch. While still a lad he drank and gambled. "Ah! the tricks of pages," said his mother to his father. "No," replied the bear leader; "I wish to Heaven they were—they are the tricks of lacqueys, rascals!" One day looking out from a window at St. James's, he saw Bubb Doddington roll by. "There," said the estimable prince, "there goes a man they call the most sensible fellow in England; yet, with all his cleverness, I have just nicked him out of five hundred pounds." He joined the Opposition to spite his father and Sir Robert Walpole; and earned his father's undying hate by removing his wife when she was in actual labour from Hampton Court to St. James's Palace, from whence he was very soon "quoited" to Kew. His mother on her death-bed refused to insult his father by seeing him.

During the '45 Rebellion, he showed some feeble desire to lead the army, being jealous of his truculent brother, the Duke of Cumberland; but the fool's ambition subsided into having a model of Carlisle Castle made in confectionery, and bombarding it with sugar-plums at the head of his maids of honour and mistresses. Eventually the poor creature died from a cold caught by putting on a thin silk coat in the month of March, during a fit of pleurisy. In a fit of coughing, he broke an internal abscess, which had been caused by a blow from a tennis ball, cried out "I feel death!" and died almost immediately. The bitter Jacobite epitaph upon him was only too just:

Here lies Fred,
Who was alive, and is dead.
Had it been his father,
I had much rather;
Had it been his brother,
Still better than another;
Had it been his sister,
No one would have missed her;
Had it been the whole generation,
Still better for the nation;
But since 'tis only Fred,
Who was alive, and is dead,
There's no more to be said.

Some traditions of Fred still linger about Epsom.

An obelisk (the flint of which went to face St. Martin's Church, in the town) that formerly stood at the end of an avenue of walnut trees in the Common Fields, marked the spot of Fred's only victory. The prince, one morning, walking alone in his white silk coat, espied a specially sable sweep, sitting contemplatively under one of the trees, perhaps fatigued with the ascent of the palace chimneys. Fred, indignant at such an unmannered churl coming between the wind and his nobility, bade him begone, and at once. The tired sweep, espying a fop or a footman, he hardly knew which, refused, point blank. The prince flourished his clouded cane, which the sweep wrenched from his hand and threw away, then stripped and offered combat. The prince, with a spark of the spirit of his grandsire at Dettingen, removed his silk coat and fell to. Tradition, generally loyal, affirms that the sweep was beaten; but there certainly are calumnious reports that the sweep conquered, and set his black foot on the wizen neck of Bubb Doddington's noble friend. Other local historians make George the Third (when a boy) the adversary and conqueror of the sweep;—such is History. Soon after Fred's lamented death, a Mr. Belchier rebuilt Durdans, but a fire destroyed the place, and one of the Heathcotes reared the present structure of red brick bound with stone. Certain it is that young Prince George was much here at the time when the populace were so jealous of his mother's unwise intimacy with handsome Lord Bute. The only other recollection of royalty at Epsom is at Woodcote Park, where the drive to the Racecourse has been closed ever since the Queen used it in 1840, her last visit to Epsom, at which place she is then supposed to have taken umbrage.

The crow flutters down for a moment on Pitt-place, that old mansion by the church. This house was the scene of one of the best authenticated, and yet most easily explained ghost stories than ever befuddled the superstitious. It was the residence of Lord Lyttleton, secretary to Frederick, Prince of Wales, and author of the History of Henry the Second, and who leading the prince to patronise Mallet, Thomson, Pope, Glover, and Dr. Johnson, gained him the only credit he ever got or deserved. It gives us pain to observe that the worthy nobleman's History is wretchedly dull, and his poetry, all but the monody to his wife, intolerable. The son of this worthy peer was a celebrated rake, who, a short time before his death, declared that he had seen a white dove flutter over his bed, look mournfully on him, then disappear. A short time after, the corpse of a woman clothed in white appeared by his bedside, and waved her livid hand, as she placed her face close to him, and uttered the words, "Lord Lyttleton, prepare to die!" he felt her cold breath, and saw that her eyes were glazed. He gasped out, "When?" and the apparition replied, "Ere three days you must die." This dead woman was a Mrs. Amphlett, who had died of grief in Ireland on the seduction of her two

daughters by Lord Lyttleton. On the fatal third day the rake, so the local tradition goes, breakfasted in London with Mrs. Amphlett's two daughters and some friends, was in high spirits, and remarked confidently, "If I live over to-night, I shall have jockeyed the ghost." The party then ordered post-horses, and set off for Pitt-place. On their arrival his lordship had a sharp attack of illness, but recovered. He went early to bed, first laughingly putting back the clock to deceive the ghost. He then sent his valet for a spoon to stir his medicine. On his return the servant found that his lordship had got out of bed, and had fallen dead on the floor. The simple fact is, that the miserable trickster had invented the whole story, having resolved to poison himself. There was, therefore, no miracle in the tolerably accurate fulfilment of a self-made prediction. "It was no doubt singular," says Sir Walter Scott, who was generally only too credulous, "that a man who meditated his exit from the world should have chosen to play such a trick upon his friends; but it is still more credible that a whimsical man should do so wild a thing, than that a message should be sent from the dead to tell a libertine at what precise hour he should expire."

When the wells were beginning to be disregarded, Epsom became notorious as the residence of Mrs. Mapp, the bone-setter, a character whom Hogarth has immortalised in his picture of *The Consultation of Physicians*. This Mrs. Mapp was the daughter of a Wiltshire bone-setter and sister of Polly Peachum, whom Gay enlisted into the *Beggar's Opera*. The bone-setter and the wise woman were at this period much resorted to by English country people, who preferred a doctor who was also a little of the astrologer. This woman, after wandering about the country as a sort of privileged mad woman, suddenly became an authority in surgery, and settled at Epsom, where the company at the wells supplied her with occasional dislocations. Her success, indeed, is said to have brought her so many patients that the people of Epsom paid her to settle amongst them. Broken arms and legs she dexterously set, dislocated shoulders and elbows she refitted. Gifted with amazing strength, she would plant her foot against a patient's chest and drag his bones back to their true position. "Crazy Sally" was a dangerous woman to offend. Some surgeons, jealous of her fame, once sent her a "posture maker," as acrobats were then called, with a wrist apparently dislocated. The man groaned and screamed, but Sally felt in a moment that the bones were in their proper order; so, to have her revenge, she gave the man's arm such a wrench as to dislocate it. "Go," she said, "to the fools who sent you and try their skill, if you like, or come back here in a month and I'll put you straight." In her flowery days, Mrs. Mapp, the bone-setter, drove a carriage and four, and received as much as twenty pounds in the day. At last Mapp, footman to a mercer in Ludgate-hill, won by

her full purse, married her, robbed her, and forsook her, all within the fortnight. She never recovered this, and died in London in 1737 so poor that she had to be buried by the parish.

The Reverend Jonathan Bouchier, who became rector of Epsom in 1784, deserves a word as a sturdy Royalist and a great scholar, of whom several interesting stories are told. Before the American war broke out, Mr. Bouchier was rector of several parishes in Virginia and Maryland. He once thrashed a rebel Yankee blacksmith who had insulted his king and country, and to the very last he persisted boldly in preaching Royalist sermons. On one occasion the Tory rector had been informed that if he dared pray for King George he would be fired at in his pulpit. Nothing daunted, the next Sunday the resolute man ascended the pulpit stairs armed with two horse-pistols, one of which he laid on either side of his pulpit cushion; with this preamble he preached an unflinching sermon, ending with this stinging passage:

"Unless I forbear praying for the king I have been notified that I am to pray no longer. No intimation could be more distressing to me; but I do not require a moment's hesitation, distressing as the dilemma is. Entertaining a respect for my ordination vow, I am firm in my resolution, whilst I pray in public at all, to conform to the unmutated Liturgy of my Church, and reverencing the injunctions of the Apostle: 'I will pray for the king and all who are in authority under him, as long as I live.' Yes, whilst I have my being, I will, with Zadok, the priest, and Nathan, the prophet, proclaim GOD SAVE THE KING." The Americans had no heart to fire at so bold and honest a man, and Jonathan Bouchier descended the pulpit stairs unharmed. This learned clergyman married a descendant of Addison's, a very beautiful Virginian girl. A curious and authentic instance of presentiment preceded their first meeting. Miss Addison had dreamed that she saw her future husband, and awoke with a vivid remembrance of his face and manner. The next day Mr. Bouchier called on her father with letters of introduction, and on Miss Addison entering the room, she saw in the handsome stranger the lover of her dream. This rector of Epsom devoted many years to a completion of Johnson's Dictionary. He left it at his death unfinished, and the manuscript, down to the letter I, is said to have been used by the compilers of Webster's Dictionary.

The crow passing over Surrey on his swift way to the sea, alights at Ashted Park, on one of the limes, an avenue of which light-leaved trees was planted when William of Orange came here to visit his loyal adherent, Sir Robert Howard, a poor dramatist, the prototype of Bayes, in the Duke of Buckingham's comedy of the *Rehearsal*, and the Sir Positive Atall of Shadwell's *Sullen Lovers*. His romantic plays, stuffed full of extravagant metaphors and false tropes, seem to have deserved all the ridicule showered upon them.

Evelyn tells us of a man he knew who planted an ash-tree, and before his death cut it down and sold it for forty shillings; and he goes on to mention, as a proof of the profits of growing trees, that he knew three acres of barren land sown with acorns, that in sixty years became a thriving wood worth three hundred pounds. The records of Ashtead help us to some facts about the age of trees, which are difficult to obtain elsewhere. Here at least we get at certainty. There are some fine Spanish chesnuts growing near the lake on this demesne that have reached the girth of twenty-two feet. These fine trees were planted by Thomas Davie, an old gardener, six years before the battle of Culloden. When a boy Davie brought from London three shillings' worth of Spanish chesnuts as a treat for his fellow-servants, but the fruit being then little eaten in England, the servants took a prejudice, and would not touch them. Davie, not wishing to waste the chesnuts, sowed them in a bed in the garden at Ashtead, and afterwards planted them out where they now stand. The sheltered, moist, warm park exactly suited them. These facts convince us more than ever that the age of celebrated trees is often overrated. Trees supposed to be of immense antiquity are often only the descendants of historic trees, but they have grown up in the same place and retained the name of their progenitors. But for the facts we have noted, the Spanish chesnuts of Ashtead would pass muster for veterans of three centuries, and the topographer might have sworn they were planted the year Catharine of Arragon came to England.

A certain curious legend is told of two large antlers preserved in Ashtead Hall. They once belonged to a king of the herd, a stag of great age to whom all the other deer paid homage, obeying all his behests, and allowing him even to gore to death offenders against his authority. When he reached extreme old age the monarch remained almost entirely by the banks of the lake where the grass grew thickest and greenest, and where he could drink without having to walk far. It is even said that his special followers used to bring him leaves and chewed grass, and waited upon him with undeviating loyalty till the last.

A little further south, at Leatherhead, where the "nousling" Mole slips between the trees, and just by the bridge, stands an old inn, now the Running Horse, an ale house, that has for hundreds of years opened its doors to thirsty and dusty travellers. This is where Eleanor Rummyng, the famous ale wife lived, upon whom Skelton once wrote one of his rough and ready satires in jolting verse, not unlike what Rabelais might have written. The enemy of Wolsey describes the old landlady,

Footed like a plane,
Legged like a crane;
In her furred flocket,
And grey russet rocket.
Her huke of Lincoln green—
It had been hers I woen

More than forty year.
She breweth nappy ale,
And maketh pot ale
To travellers and tinkers,
To sweaters, to swynkers,
To all good ale drinkers,
That will nothing spare,
But drink till they stare,
And bring themselves bare.

And then, in his reckless steepchase way, the rough poet sketches Eleanor's gossips with almost Chaucerian breadth and more than Rabelais coarseness, as they come in with eggs, and wool, and London pins, and rabbit-skins, and strings of beads, to barter for the dame's ale.

There is still extant a curious old woodcut of ugly, jovial Eleanor holding an ale-pot in either hand, with below the following inscription:

When Skelton wore the laurel crown,
My ale put all the ale wives down.

And here at Leatherhead, where Judge Jeffreys once hid his ugly head when his time of trouble came, the crow feels a duty to give a word to the peculiarities of that strange and weird river, the Mole, whom topographical Drayton describes, in rather an extravagant allegory, as beloved by the Thames:

But as they thus in pomp came sporting on the shore,
'Gainst Hampton Court he meets the soft and gentle
Mole,
Whose eye so pierced his breast.

The parents of Master Thames refuse their consent, but the lad is obstinate:

But Thames would hardly on; oft turning back to show,
From his much-loved Mole, how he was loath to go.

The parents, still obdurate, raise hills to shut in their wilful daughter; but all in vain; Mole is so artful:

Mole digs herself a path by working day and night,
(According to her name) to show her nature right;
And underneath the earth for three miles' space doth
creep,
Till, gotten out of sight, far from her mother's keep,
Her fore-intended course the wanton nymph doth run,
As longing to embrace old Tame and Isis' son.

The river is said to derive its name from the Celtic word *melyn*, a mill (in Doomsday Book it is noted as turning twenty mills); but it is just as likely that it was first called the Mole from its singular tendency to burrow. It springs from a cluster of little rivulets on the borders of Sussex that meet at Gatwick, in Surrey, and, coursing under the arches of Kinersley Bridge, push on for the leafy vale of Mickleham. There is an erroneous notion prevalent that the river Mole suddenly dives into the earth, disappears, and re-emerges at a spot further on. Two of the *swallows*, as they are called, can be seen near the Fridley meadows, and others near the little picturesque roadside inn at Burford Bridge, where Keats wrote the latter part of his *Endymion*. These swallows, into which the Mole soaks rather than dives, are really occasioned by the river as it swirls round bends of the hills, washing away the mud, sand, and softer strata from under the more resisting and less impressionable chalk.

underground channels continue beneath activities. Gossiping Aubrey, a contemporary of the excellent Evelyn, says that in the great pit, thirty feet deep, and running water at the bottom of it, opened right near the Mole. Defoe mentions a party of gentlemen damming up this river, the river suddenly sinking all away; the experiment was caught in the dry fields a vast quantity

above the Mole, which flows like a moat out of the cliff, rises that scarped rampart Hill, which is one of the great chalk hills that spread from Farnham to Folkestone, to meet the red sandstone. The chalk at here in a long pier-head, four hundred and fifty-five feet high, so barren and desolate on its escarpment where the rain has off in long furrows all the surface earth, that even a blue hare-bell can fix its roots or flourish; but its south side is covered with bosky groves of box-trees, planted, as I think, by the Romans, but most probably Pious. One tradition attributes their gift to some Earl of Arundel, two or three centuries ago; but in old deeds, as early as John and Henry the Third, "Henry of Box Hill" and "Adam of Box Hill" are found named as witnesses. The box-tree is fond of the chalk, and grows equally well at Bexley, in the Boxwell, on the Cotswolds; and on the chalk hills near Dunstable. Another proof of the box is indigenous in this part of the country is that at Betchworth, close by, it is in equally wild luxuriance, and at least twenty feet high. The groves at Box Hill—dark, dense, with the long whitish stems bare and no vegetation growing beneath or on them—have an unusual bewitched and weird appearance, so different from the ordinary hazel underwood of England, purplish with orchis or lit with primroses.

The close-grained crisp box has always been valuable for cabinet-makers and woodworkers. In 1608 fifty pounds' worth of box-trees were cut down here on one sheep-walk. In a year or two of 1712 three thousand pounds' worth were sold; and in 1795, when the demand reduced the supply of the superior wood from the Levant, Sir W. Mildmay cut the trees (uncut for sixty-five years) at a thousand pounds. This cutting it was should last over twelve years, so that the hill was never shaved too bare. Over the top of the hill the soil suddenly ceases to be box, turns purple and gold with gorse and heather, and is studded with odorous juniper. Just on the brow of the hill that rises to Dorking, there is a small cottage, and, looking down on the valley, a table for picnickers and resting travellers; under this lies Major Labelliere—an odd place for a house. Well, it is; but this was a major of the times, who went mad from a disappointment in love—and what eccentricity might not be expected of a marine crossed in love? Here was a handsome, fashionable man, never quite recovered having been rejected

by a lady in early life, and whose brain eventually gave way under the strain of that bitter regret. His old friend the Duke of Devonshire, pitying his misfortune, allowed him one hundred pounds a year. His humour was to revel in rags and dirt till he became a sort of walking dung-hill. His last eccentricity was, on his death-bed, to leave an expectant friend a curiously-folded, sealed, and promising parcel, not by any means to be opened till after his death. It proved, unfortunately, to contain nothing but a plain memorandum-book. By his own request, the major was buried on the brow of the hill (perhaps a favourite resting-place of the crazed whilom man of fashion), without church rites, and with his head downwards; it being one of the gallant major's favourite axioms that the world was turned upside-down, and so at the last day he should come up right.

That little inn, the Hare and Hounds, nestling at the foot of Box Hill, is specially dear to the crowd, because in 1817 it sheltered Keats, who here wrote that wild poem of Diana's love, that begins,

A thing of beauty is a joy for ever.

Here, in the clefts of Box Hill, he found the scenes he describes:

Under the brow

Of some steep mossy hill, where ivy dun
Would hide us up, although spring leaves be none,
And where rank yew-trees, as we rustle through,
Will drop their scarlet berry cups of dew.

In the same sunny little inn, beside the river, Lord Nelson spent several days of retirement with the syren who beguiled him, before starting for Trafalgar. Mrs. Barbauld has left some pleasant lines on this little caravanserai, and they end prettily enough:

From the smoke and the din, and the hurry of town,
Let the care-wearied cit to this spot hasten down;
And embosomed in shades hear the lark singing shrill,
In the cottage that stands at the foot of the hill.

* * *

Here's a health to the cottage, a health to the plains;
Ever blithe be your damsels and constant your swains:
Here may industry, peace, and contentment reign still,
While the Mole softly creeps at the foot of the hill.

AURIEL.

I HEARD a voice by night, that call'd to me,
"Auriel! Auriel!"

The night was dark, and nothing could I see,
Yet knew I by the voice that it was she

Whom my soul loves so well,
That when she calls her follower I must be,
Whether she call from heaven or from hell.

Then to the voice I said, "What is thy will?"
But, for sole response, through the darkness fell
Nothing but mine own name repeated still,
For still the voice call'd "Auriel! Auriel!"
I could not sleep, nor rest upon my bed.
So I rose up, and, with uncertain tread,
Out thro' the darkness of the night I pass'd
On to the heath; and on before me, fast
Over the heath, that wandering voice did flit:
Over the heath, listening, I followed it.
Not fast, indeed, for, at each footstep made,
Methought I stumbled on a dead man, laid
Flat, with upstared face and unshut eye,
Stonily staring on the midnight sky.

Harness'd was each dead man from head to heel,
In heavy harness of rust-eaten steel,
And every dead man held in his right hand
The bloody hilt of a blade-broken brand.
And unto me it seemed that I had seen
Those dead men's faces, somewhere, long ago;
But when, or where (if it were ever so)
Was gone out of my mind. On this dark plain
Doubtless some deadly battle must have been,
And no man left by the relentless foe
To bury those that were in battle slain.
I feared to tread upon them.

Suddenly
A wind arose that, roaring, rent the sky
Into lean swarthy rage, where thro' there fell
A moony light. And suddenly all those
Arm'd corpses in that roaring wind arose,
And shouted to me, "Auriel! Auriel!"
Waving aloft their broken brands.

I cried,
"Who are ye?" And the dead men all replied,
"Dost thou not know us? Thine of old we were.
Look on our faces, for they once were fair.
Are they so changed? Our leader then wert thou,
And we fought bravely. But thy foes, and ours,
Were strongest. And the strife is over now,
And we be all dead men. And all the towers
We built are fallen, all our banners torn,
All our swords broken, we ourselves forlorn
Of sepulture, tho' sons of noble sires,
Born to sit, crown'd, on thrones, and be obey'd;
Sprung of high hopes, proud thoughts, and bright
desires;
Who should have been immortal, not being made
Of common clay. Auriel! Auriel!
The winds of heaven pursue us. Fare thee well."
And while they spake the night wind from my sight
Swept them away into the weltering night.
And all the plain was bare.

Again there fell
Upon mine ear the first voice, calling me,
And I look'd up, but nothing could I see.
And still the voice called "Auriel! Auriel!"
Sadly to that familiar voice I said,
"What heart or hope have I to follow thee?
Are they not lost, all those whom at thy call
To mine own overthrow, and theirs, I led?
Where be my friends in arms that followed me?
Where all my peerless comrades, my dear dead?
For now I know again their faces all,
But they are gone!"

Then on mine ear did fall
The selfsame voice, but clearer, "Here are we,
Thy friends in arms, thy comrades of the past,
And followers once, but leaders now at last;
Whom, by remembering us, thou hast revived.
Alive we are, but not as once we lived.
Many our lives were, but those lives are done;
And, lest death make us dust, love made us one.
Whiles we were many, then we followed thee,
Who needs must follow us now one we be:
One presence, made of many pleasures past;
One perfect image, in whose mould are cast
And kept together all the imaginings
Of many beautiful defeated things;
One fair result of many foil'd intents;
One music, made of many instruments;
One form, for ever femininely fair,
Of many forces that in manhood were;
One face with many features, and one name
With many meanings."

While the voice thus cried,
With utterance louder, but in tone the same,
The black ribb'd clouds aloof were bursten wide,
And the strong moon sprang thro' them, and became
A sudden living presence on the night,
Making it beautiful. Then I beheld
(Bathed in the beauty of that sudden light)
Like a white angel, her my soul loves well,
Floating thro' heaven above the barren field;
And still she call'd me "Auriel! Auriel!"

And still I follow'd. And it seem'd that days,
And nights, and weeks, and months, and years went by,
As we went on, by never-ending ways,
Across the world; and ever was mine eye
Fix'd on that floating form with faithful gaze.
And seasons, little cared for—shine or shade,
Or heat or cold—changed round us. Many a spring,
And many a summer, many an autumn, stray'd
Across my path, and did around me fling
Their florid arms; and many a winter made
His icy fingers meet, and strove to cling
About me: but I struggled on, afraid
Lest I should lose that form by lingering.
And, if I linger'd, ever the voice said,
"Auriel, wherefore lingerest thou?"

At last
We reach'd what seem'd the end of all the world;
Frontier'd by scornful summits bare and vast,
Where thro' a single perilous pathway curl'd
Into an unknown land, 'twixt ice and snow.
There was a heap of human bones below;
Above, a flock of vultures. And, 'twixt these,
Hard by a stream which long had ceased to flow,
Being frost-bound, a squalid, lean old man,
Nursing a broken harp upon his knees,
Sat on the frozen pass. His eyes were wan
But full of wicked looks.

She my soul loved
Before me up that perilous pathway moved,
Calling me from above, and beckoning.
But he that sat before the pass began
To twang his harp, which had but one shrill string
(Whose notes like icy needles thro' me ran)
And, with a crack'd and querulous voice, to sing
"O fool! O miserable fool, forbear!
For yonder is the land of ice and snow.
And she is dead that beckoneth to thee there,
And dead for ever are the dead, I know."
While thus the old man sang to me below,
Those vultures scream'd above 'neath the icy air,
"Dead are the dead for ever!"

"What art thou,
Malignant wretch?" I cried.

The old man said,
"I am the ancient porter of this pass,
Beyond which lies the land of ice and snow.
And all the dwellers in that land are dead,
And dead for ever are the dead I know.
And this my harp—I know not when, alas!
But all its strings were broken long ago
Save one which Time makes tough. The others were
Of sweeter tone, but this the more intense.
And, for my name—some say it is Despair,
And others say it is Experience."
Thereat he laugh'd, and shook his squalid rags,
And in his sheamy eyes grim mockery gleam'd.
And loud again, upon the icy crags
Above, the roused baldheaded vultures scream'd.

SAINT MARTIN-LE-GRAND'S ADOPTED CHILD.

THE bill for the transference of the telegraphs in the United Kingdom, from private control to the control of the State—that is to say for the purchase by government of the existing telegraphic lines and appliances, and the placing of them under the direction of the Post Office has become law. As, while the matter was in abeyance,* we took occasion warmly to recommend the adoption of the proposal then

* See ALL THE YEAR ROUND, First Series, vol. II, p. 37.

before the House of Commons, we think we have reason to render due homage both to the Tory government which proposed an essentially liberal measure, and to the Liberal government which had the magnanimity to carry out an arrangement which was obviously for the public benefit, notwithstanding that it was not originated by themselves. Of course this happy result has not been arrived at, without a certain amount of trouble and opposition. That magnanimous creature, Vested Interests (who had thought but little of his property invested in telegraphic shares, for some years past), no sooner heard of the proposition than, like the merry Swiss boy mentioned in song, he took up his milking pail, and was "off and to labour away," determined to drain the last drop from that finest and fattest of milch-kine, the public. Holders of telegraphic stock, to whom such a thing as a dividend was unknown, began to study the auctioneers' advertisements of "estates to be sold," and asked their friends if they knew of any three hundred guinea weight-carriers likely to come into the market at the end of the season? The names of the Electric and International, and the British and Irish Magnetic, began to be bandied about among flannel-clothed stockbrokers making Saturday holiday, but never forgetting business, going through Sheperton Lock or dropping into the Bells at Ousely; in the fast morning train from Teddington there was much speculation; the noble army of jobbers and riggers saw a new field for their exertions, and made harvest therein accordingly; the City spectres who haunt the purlieus of the Exchange gibbered to each other over their mouldy Abernethy biscuits, of a new chance for obtaining a few half-crowns without the outlay of a sixpence; and monied respectability, which did not at the moment see its way to realising at a profit, wanted to know where this government interference was going to stop?

In the House of Commons also the scheme had its opponents. The honourable member to whom the mere notion that the government proposes to carry on any business hitherto carried on by private individuals or public companies acts as a red rag acts on a bull, had his say. The honourable member who won the first prize for arithmetic at St. Beomulph's Grammar School, Market Drayton, and the wooden spoon at Cambridge, who has ever since been "nuts" on his statistical powers, and who

thinks rather meanly of the abilities of the people who check the income and outlay of the entire Post-office service and prepare the estimates for parliament, had *his* say—in which he demonstrated the absurdity of the generally-received axiom that two and two make four, and that only departmental sophistry would have the hardihood to assert that three being taken from six, so many as three remain. The honourable member who dabbles in the milder and less recondite Latin quotations, stepped in promptly and glibly with his "caveat emptor:" the classical expression of his distrust in the gift-bearing Greeks (in neat allusion to the advantages offered by the government); and his belief in those principles of fair play which were summed up in three words, "audi alteram partem." Other honourable members were there who thought the Post Office clerks would rush wildly through the streets, proclaiming the secrets with which they might become acquainted in the course of their telegraph duties: as though Post Office clerks were more given to gossip than telegraph clerks, who have always had that opportunity; honourable members who thought that the wires might be surreptitiously and dishonestly "tapped," and messages thus extracted in course of transit; honourable members who thought that the obstructive and lethargic Post Office would object to the employment of private wires between houses of business; honourable members who grieve the human soul on every subject under the sun, and suggest to the unparliamentary mind that the last Reform Bill must have endowed Bedlam with at least one hundred members. But men of tact, ability, and honest purpose have overcome all this nonsense, the bill has become law, the whole telegraphic system of the United Kingdom will from the first of January next be under the sole control of the Postmaster-General, and will be worked wholly by his clerks and servants. Let us see what advantages will accrue to the public, beyond those broadly stated in our former article on the subject: premising that the public has no doubt paid dearly for its telegraphic whistle, but that we hold it to be a whistle far better worth its money than any whistle the public has bought for a very long time.

The existing telegraphic system is mainly defective in this respect: that the telegraph offices are situated at railway stations, and out of the principal centres of business and

population. The Postmaster-General proposes to remedy this defect by carrying the wires, at as early a date as possible, to the post-offices of all the towns and villages at which there is a money-order office. At the same time, as the railway companies will have the means of transmitting messages for the public, along the wires which they will maintain for their own peculiar business, it has been decided that they shall transmit such messages on behalf of the Postmaster-General, and shall account to him for the produce. The populations which have grown up around railway stations, and the persons who are taken to those stations by business or pleasure, will therefore lose none of the accommodation which they have hitherto enjoyed.

The offices which the Post Office will maintain for the collection and transmission of messages will be of three kinds, namely:

Offices of deposit for messages. Every pillar or wall box will be a place of deposit for messages, which will be carried from it at the ordinary hours of collection to an office from which they can be sent by wire. Every receiving office which is not a money-order office, will also be a place of deposit for messages, which will be carried from it at the ordinary hours of collection to the telegraph office: unless, indeed, the senders of the messages be willing to pay for immediate transmission, in which case the means of immediate transmission will be provided.

Sub-telegraphic offices.

Head telegraphic offices.

Every money-order office will be either a sub or a head telegraphic office. If it be a sub-office, it will be at the terminal point of a telegraphic line, and will merely have to transmit or receive messages. If it be a head office, it will occupy an intermediate point between two or more offices, and will have, not merely to transmit and receive messages on its own account, but to repeat the messages of other offices; it will, in fact, be a "forward" office.

Over and above the extension of the wires to every town and village in which there is a money-order office, it is proposed that district systems shall be established in some of the large towns. The classification of the offices into offices of deposit, sub-telegraphic, and head telegraphic offices, will prevail in the urban or district, as well as in the extra urban or general, systems.

In those places in which there is neither receiving office nor pillar box, and where the inhabitants give their letters to a rural

post messenger, or mail-cart driver, for transmission to the head office, they may, in like manner, if it be convenient to them, hand their telegrams to such messenger.

It is intended that all charges for the transmission of messages, portage included, shall, so far as is practicable, be pre-paid by postage stamps. Even in those cases in which some portion of the charge is paid in money by the sender or addressee, it is probable that the postmaster who receives the money payment will be required to affix postage stamps of corresponding value to the message paper, and to cancel them.

The advantages of pre-payment by postage stamps are obvious. The department will be spared the cost of making several denominations of special telegraph stamps, and of stocking twelve thousand receiving offices with them. The public will be much more likely always to have a sufficient supply of stamps near at hand than they would be if the telegraph stamps were distinct from the postage stamps; and the account of telegraphic revenue collected will be at least as simple as it would be if two classes of stamps were used.

The limits within which delivery by special messenger will be covered by the charge of one shilling for twenty words, &c. &c., are prescribed by the act: which also prescribes the extra charge for special foot messenger beyond those limits. Where the public do not care to incur that extra charge, the delivery is to be effected free of extra charge, with the next ordinary delivery of letters.

Let us consider what increase will be produced by the alteration of rate which the Post Office proposes to effect. In all cases but one, the alteration effected by the Post Office will be reduction; but as there will be no rate below one shilling, the rate in the case of messages now carried for sixpence will be doubled. These messages are town messages. In his examination before the Committee last year, it was stated by Mr. SCUDAMORE, to whose signal ability and indomitable energy the successful development of the scheme is due, that as under the government system the town offices would be much more numerous, *i.e.*, much closer to the population than are the town offices of the telegraph companies, it is probable that the charge of one shilling, which would, in many cases, include postage, would, as a general rule, not exceed the existing charge of sixpence; plus the extra charge for por-

terage, which is levied in the great majority of cases. During the first twenty-two weeks of 1867 the London and Provincial Telegraph Company had a sixpenny rate for messages, and carried ninety-three thousand three hundred and forty-six messages. During the first twenty-two weeks of 1868 they had a shilling rate and carried only eighty-eight thousand and fifty messages. There was no marked change between their area of operations or number of offices. The above figures show a falling off of between five and six per cent; and of course the company lost also the annual growth which would have accrued if they had not raised the rate.

If we assume that when the uniform rate of one shilling is established, the messages now carried for sixpence will fall off by one-half, we shall probably make a much more than ample allowance for the effect of the alteration. On the other hand, it is contended that the increase of fifteen per cent expected to follow from the increased facilities given by the Post Office, will go to counterbalance the falling off produced by the change of rate.

In the case of the messages now carried for one shilling, there will be no change of rate. In all other cases, the Post Office proposes to effect reductions: that is, a reduction of thirty-three per cent in the rate for messages transmitted over distances exceeding one hundred, but not exceeding two hundred, miles; a reduction of fifty per cent for messages transmitted over distances exceeding two hundred miles in Great Britain or in Ireland; and a reduction of from sixty to seventy-five per cent for messages transmitted between Great Britain and Ireland. That reductions of rate tend largely to increase the transmission of telegraphic messages, is abundantly proved. The precise effect of each reduction may be matter of dispute, but no one can doubt that each reduction will have an effect. The principal witness before the Committee last year, attempted to deduce from the experience of foreign countries the precise effect of each of the contemplated reductions. His deductions were considered sound, and his estimates of increase moderate; but, of course, deductions drawn from the experience of foreign countries are always open to the objection that this country differs in some respect or other from foreign countries, and that circumstances which operate powerfully abroad will be less effective here. It seems

to us that this objection is not very weighty. It may be fairly reckoned that a franc goes about as far on the Continent as a shilling goes here; and that from the effect produced abroad by a reduction from a franc-and-a-half to a franc, the effect of a reduction here from eighteenpence to a shilling may be safely inferred.

The managers of the principal telegraph companies agree with this view.

The extension of the existing system of wires to the money-order offices of the United Kingdom, whereby the telegraph will be brought closer to the population, will, it is expected, add greatly to the business done. By reducing the distance between the telegraph stations and the senders and receivers of messages, the charges for portage (which are considerable, and in many cases almost prohibitory), are reduced, and the rapidity of transmission is increased. The difficulty of finding portage in rural districts, irrespective of the charge for it, is at present, in many cases, very great. This difficulty will of course be lessened as the wires are brought closer to the population.

Under the new régime, the rules relative to the lease of special wires to newspaper proprietors, and to special press messages; and the collecting and editing of news; will be somewhat different to those now in force. The existing companies let special wires, but at high and almost prohibitive rates; convey special messages for the press at rates lower than those charged to the general public; and also collect, edit, and transmit, intelligence to the press.

	Per annum.
They receive for special wires ...	£ 3,953
For press messages ...	2,782
For collecting, editing, and transmitting news ...	25,187
In all ...	£31,882

The Post Office will continue to let special wires, and, as its maximum annual charge for a special wire is to be five hundred pounds, whereas the maximum charge at present is one thousand pounds, and the minimum charge seven hundred and fifty pounds, it may fairly be expected to derive the existing amount of revenue, namely, four thousand pounds, or the rent of eight special wires. With the special press messages and the intelligence, the case is different. The Post Office will not collect and edit news for the press, but will merely transmit that which is collected and edited by individuals or associations acting on behalf of the press. The charge, there-

fore, to the press will merely be a charge for transmission; but the Post Office will be relieved of the cost incurred by the telegraph companies in the collection and editing of news, which latter cost will fall directly upon the press.

The system of remitting money by telegraph will, it is expected, be extensively cultivated by the Post Office. This system is already used by the Electric and International Company, but is confined to eighteen of their principal stations. The charges for money remittances and retirement of bills, are, up to twenty pounds, two shillings; one shilling for each ten pounds, or part of ten pounds in addition. The usual tariff for messages is charged plus the foregoing sums. There is no limit to the sums to be remitted, because the larger the sum the greater the profit.

The mode of conducting the remittance business seems to be this: the person desirous of effecting a remittance, say from Liverpool to London, attends at the Liverpool telegraph office and addresses a telegram to the secretary of the Electric and International Telegraph Company in London, specifying the sum about to be remitted and instructing him where to pay it. After defraying the ordinary message charge and the commission, the remitter hands over to the manager of the telegraph office the amount of the remittance.

The amount of money remitted, varies with the state of trade. When speculation is rife, remittances are large and frequent. In the absence of speculation, not much remittance business is done. About one hundred and fifty thousand pounds a year is the average aggregate of the remittances. At half per cent this represents seven hundred and fifty pounds for commission alone: to which must be added the produce of the telegrams at ordinary rates. This means of effecting remittances seems to be resorted to, chiefly for the purpose of "retiring" bills at the last possible moment. The largest amount known to be remitted in one sum, is eleven thousand pounds.

In Switzerland and Belgium, "money-order telegrams" are in much use. A card is filled up by the remitter, in the usual manner, and on his handing it in, with the amount of the order, he is supplied with a form of "money-order telegram." This he fills up in the same way as the card, but has to state the amount in words as well as figures. Card and telegram are then handed back to the postmaster, who compares them, *enters the amount in figures in a space*

left for that purpose in the telegram, signs it, and stamps it with his dated stamp.

If the remitter desire to add nothing to this telegram, the post-office, on his paying the price of it, calculated in the ordinary way, despatches it to the telegraph office; but if the remitter wish to add anything to the telegram, it is given back to him, and, after adding to it his communication to the payee, he takes it himself to the telegraph office, and pays the price corresponding to the length of the message. The telegraph office which has to deliver the message at its destination, makes out two copies: one for the payee; the other for the post-office. The latter copy contains only the particulars of the order, but not the private message. On the payee presenting himself at the post-office with his telegram, he is at once paid, and his receipt is taken on the office copy of the telegram. (About eight hundred money orders per month are sent by telegram.) All money orders must be paid within ten days of receipt at the paying office. If the payee cannot be found, if the order be addressed "poste restante," and it should not have been applied for, or if the payee cannot give sufficient proof of his identity, the money-order card is sent back to the office from which it was received, and the amount is returned to the remitter; who signs the receipt on the back of the card, in the place where the payee would have signed, had the money been paid to him.

No decision has as yet, we believe, been come to by the Post Office as to which system it will adopt for the remittance of money; but the authorities, we have no doubt, will render the process as convenient and as reasonable as possible.

THE WOLF-ROCK LIGHT.

ALL round our coasts, as the sun goes down, twinkling lights break out on each headland, and, as the twilight deepens and darkness grows over the sea, their brilliancy increases until they shine out from the blackness of night with a "strange unearthly splendour in the glare." The sailor, too, overtaken by the night, finds here and there, starting as it were out of the sea, friendly lights, which guide him on his way, or warn him of treacherous rocks or shoals. These pillars of light far away from land, surrounded by a dark and often angry sea, are glorious witnesses of our civilisation; and they stand as monuments of human skill and perseverance and of man's triumph over the dangers and difficulties of building firm and enduring structures upon isolated rocks at sea.

The Wolf Rock, which rears its jagged head about nine miles south-west of the Land's End, and on which many a ship has struck, is on the eve of being converted from a treacherous enemy of the mariner into a trustworthy guide and a true friend. The last stone of a lighthouse on this rock was laid a short time since, and comforting beams of light will soon shine out from it over the neighbouring waters.

The magnitude of the work of building a lighthouse out at sea, is not enough considered. Before we revert to the tower on the Wolf Rock, it may not be uninteresting to devote a few words to some of the most remarkable lighthouses built on isolated rocks.

Every one has heard of the Eddystone Lighthouse, and the story of Winstanley, the Plymouth mercer, is one of those heroic tales which the world will not willingly let die. Moved with sorrow on account of the many ill-fated vessels which struck on the dreaded rock, he determined to try to place a lighthouse there. After numerous and disheartening failures, he at length managed to raise a wooden tower, and having made it the purpose of his life and bestowed much thought and labour on the work, he believed it to be of such wonderful strength, that he expressed the hope that he might be in the tower during the fiercest storm that ever stirred the deep. He had his wish, poor fellow! Miss Ingelow relates the story in charming verse. She tells us of a night, when the inhabitants of Plymouth were all in great fear because of a terrible storm which raged outside, when

The great mad waves were rolling graves,
And each flung up its dead;
The seething flow was white below,
And black the sky o'erhead.

And when the dawn—the dull grey dawn—
Broke on the trembling town,
And men looked south from the harbour mouth,
The lighthouse tower was down.

Winstanley, who had gone out with some workmen to do some repairs, perished with it. Another wooden tower was shortly after built by John Rudyard, which, after standing forty years, was destroyed by fire. Last, came Smeaton, who, after three years' labour, in 1759 completed the present stone lighthouse, which, for more than a century, has staunchly fulfilled its purpose. 'The old wise men of the beach shook their old heads and muttered evil forebodings about the new tower; and on the occasion of an unusually violent storm, they agreed that, if the tower stood through *that*, it would stand until the day of judgment. It would seem that their words are in a fair way to be realised, for the lighthouse stands now as firm as ever it did, and is virtually part and parcel of the rock itself.

There is a rock on the east coast of Scotland right in the way of the up and down navigation, and twelve miles from the land. It is known by the name of the Bell, or Inchcape Rock, and has been a terror to many a sailor. On this rock was placed a bell, as tradition says by the Abbot of Aberbrothock, which

a sea pirate once took down. The pirate, a short time after, perished on the same rock, "in the righteous judgment of God," as the story goes. A lighthouse now stands there. The difficulties encountered in building the tower seem to have been very great. The rock is just barely uncovered at a low spring tide, and then only could work be done upon it. The superintending engineer and the workmen lived for a long time in a floating vessel anchored off the rock, in which they rode out many a gale, and passed many anxious hours. Afterwards, they built a temporary wooden barrack on the rock, and were a little more comfortable, though rather closely packed. But they overcame all difficulties, and after five years of persevering labour—1807 to 1811—completed the lighthouse.

Again, there is the Skerryvore Rock off the west coast of Scotland, the most elevated point of a low-lying reef, fourteen miles from the island of Tyree, and fifty miles from the mainland, and exposed to the full force of the Atlantic Ocean. The sea manifested a fierce objection to anything in the way of a building being established on this rock. The workmen built themselves a wooden barrack, as at the Bell Rock; but before they had finished it, the building was washed away, and the thick iron stanchions were torn out of their places, or bent and twisted like pieces of wire. They tried again, and eventually succeeded in erecting a firmer and more substantial dwelling-place for their company of thirty, which resisted the power of the waves. They began the lighthouse in 1838, and during six years their labour was marked by great risks, numerous delays, and heavy disappointments. But skill and energy were at last triumphant. In February, 1844, the work was successfully finished.

The great works at the Bishop's Rock, the westernmost of the Scilly Isles; the tower on the Smalls Rock, in the Bristol Channel; the lighthouse on the Hanois Rock off Guernsey; all tell the same story of engineering skill, of indomitable energy and perseverance, culminating in successful and beneficent results.

The erection of the lighthouse on the Wolf Rock, rivals the great works of former days. The rock is completely covered at high water, and shows only two feet above low water. In 1861, the Trinity House authorities resolved to commence the building of a lighthouse on it; in March, 1862, work was begun on the rock. Slowly and surely it has progressed, in spite of innumerable obstacles. A workyard was established at Penzance, where the stones were prepared and fitted into one another, by dovetailing horizontally and vertically, before being sent off to the rock; in fact, the tower was built at Penzance. Then, as opportunities of tide and weather occurred for working on the rock, so shipments of stones were despatched. During the whole seven years from 1862, the men have not been able to work on the rock, more than one hundred and seventy-three days of ten hours a day. Of

course such hazardous work could not be free from disaster, and it is recounted how, at different times, the sea swept away masonry, and bent great iron bars, and how, in the winter of 1865, thirty-two of the large stones (the whole of one course of masonry, and nearly a season's work), were carried away, the strong iron bolts being wrenched completely out of their places by the force of the sea. Landing on the rock and getting off again was, and is now, a hazardous performance. The workmen have frequently found it so. Sometimes it would happen that while the men were working, a sudden wind would spring up and rouse the sea into a furious state; or perhaps there would be a dead calm, and the sea would seem like glass, when all at once, without apparent cause, great rollers would come "home" and dash themselves on the exposed rock, creating a tremendous uproar. These rollers are known to be the results of violent storms somewhere in mid-ocean; they come in, swollen with pent-up wrath, probably from dreadful scenes of tempest and wreck far away, and dash their gathered fury with tremendous violence on the rock. Then, the men, who always work in cork jackets, cling to their ropes, with their heads to the sea, and hold on like grim death, while the great waves rush over and past them. If there be no chance of a cessation of the violence, they look out for a rope from the little vessel that lies pitching and tossing outside, so that they may be hauled off the rock while the great waves are dashing and crashing with tremendous fury all around them. Just such a scene as this occurred when the first stone of the tower was laid. But at last our engineers have overcome the tremendous obstacles which threatened to make it impossible to place a light-tower on the dreaded Wolf; and now, in this fearfully exposed situation, a stately column lifts its head.

It is hoped that the light will be shown at the beginning of next year. We are promised something unusually splendid in the way of illumination. The light is to be a first order dioptric, revolving light. This sounds grand, and ought to be magnificent. In order to give it a distinctive character, it is intended that there shall be alternate flashes of red and white light. Of course it is necessary so to arrange the different lights round the coast as that they may not be mistaken by the sailor; consequently as many changes as possible have to be rung on the different varieties of lights; there are revolving, flashing, intermittent, fixed and double lights, and these may be further varied by colours of red, white, or green. In a hundred miles of coast it is probable that no two lights exactly alike, could be found. These alternate flashes of red and white light have not yet been adopted anywhere, but it is thought they will have a very brilliant and striking effect.

We have given a true picture of the Wolf Rock, and no doubt many readers of this article will feel inclined to pity the men who will have to live in the solitary tower and keep a good light burning at night. We who have comfortable homes, who can wander about the

country at our own sweet will, who can look out on the lovely face of nature with hearts full of joy, can hardly realise a life in a wave-beaten tower, with only a great canopy of sky above, and a wide expanse of sea below: the nearest approach of humanity in any shape being passing vessels, which take care to give the rock and its lighthouse a wide berth. Peculiar tales are told of the keepers at some of the rock lighthouses—how some have been brought ashore raving mad, and how others have committed suicide; but such cases are happily very rare. Actual experience shows that there is a reliable class of men to be found who are well suited to the work, who do not go mad or commit suicide, or do anything else that is mischievous. They go about their work in a steady matter-of-fact way, are quite accustomed to the fury of the elements, and are not at all put out by the most violent weather. They accept their position without much regard to risk or discomfort, apparently content to earn their daily bread without stopping to count the cost. There is some amount of pleasure in almost any state of being, and, as a rule, lightkeepers are happy after their fashion. Certainly they are not jovial, merry fellows; there is not much scope for rollicking fun in their silent watches of the night; but, they are pleasant men, who do not assert their own individuality with loud-tongued assurance; they are mild, clear-eyed, meditative men, for whom one cannot help feeling a considerable amount of respect. And they take great pride in their calling; the reflectors must not show the tiniest speck of dust; the glass of the lanterns must be made so clean that one doubts if there really is any glass there; the brass and copper-work must never lose its original brightness; the light must be made to throw out as much light as the resources at command will allow; altogether, the whole establishment must be a model of order and cleanliness. Of course, the keepers at rock stations have turns on shore—one month in every three—and they have their joys and sorrows, their hopes and fears, connected with the every-day world. In truth, theirs is a much happier existence than many lives on which we expend no sympathy.

SORROW AND THE MERMAID.

IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

IN the spring of 1855 I was at Constantinople.

Perhaps no one will ever know exactly how some of the wires were pulled which influenced the movements of the diplomatists who were at Constantinople in that eventful year, and produced important results on the whole Crimean War. What I am about to tell may be, by a side light, suggestive of strange secret workings in this direction, but is not otherwise elucidative of diplomacy. What I shall tell is true, and known to many. In the casual

introduction of a mention of two English officers, I have given them fictitious names.

I was dining at Misseri's, having been but four and twenty hours in Constantinople, when I was addressed thus by my vis-à-vis :

"God bless my soul, Eden, is that you?"

"It is."

"How did you get here?"

"By steamer."

"Why?"

"I scarcely know; but I must cross-examine you, Caradoc, in my turn. How long have you been here?"

"A twelvemonth. I am first attaché, you know."

"Do you remain?"

"Yes," with a shrug of the shoulders which suggested that the prospect was not considered a happy one.

"I am very glad."

"Dear old fellow, it will be less of a bore now you are here. Come to my rooms after dinner, and tell me the news from England, and I will explain some of the diplomatic and social mysteries of this place. Bless you, it's like a spider's web—it's so intricate and full of snares."

My dear old schoolfellow was an incarnate benedictite. He blessed up and down, right and left, through the whole length and breadth of the vocabulary. The person he spoke to, the person he spoke of, the subject which he spoke on, were always larded, if I may so term it, with blessings. It was a kind of inverted, wrong side out, species of swearing. I nodded and continued my dinner. The crowded table-d'hôte of this crowded caravanserai was even fuller than usual, but none of the persons present were very interesting to me, though there were some striking individuals, and some grotesque family groups, present. In some moods, either these or those would have been enough to divert me for a whole evening or more; now, I was in a state of mind that made me deaf, dumb, and blind to external things.

I had left England in a fury of love and disappointment. I had been jilted. My youth, and my six feet of not uncomely manhood, my ardent love, weighed amazingly light, I had found, against a coronet and twenty thousand a year.

I had quitted England on the eve of her marriage, and had been wandering about on the Continent until now. During the pauses of the dinner, through the polyglot hum of voices around, I heard one word repeated in almost every known dialect. It was "Mermaid." At first I paid so little

attention to what was said, that I heard it without attaching any sense to the word. Then my languid intelligence was sufficiently roused to suppose they were speaking of some ship in the harbour. I was surprised at so much animation about it, however, and then it dawned upon me that it must be a nickname given to a woman.

"Russian, I tell you."

"I could take my oath she is French."

"She might be Icelandic, from her coldness."

"Icelandic? Yes, possibly, but remember there are boiling springs in those snow-bound valleys of Iceland."

"Very true, and in her there is fire also, at times. She has gestures, movements, which are almost volcanic."

"Movements?"

"Well, what shall I say?—in her aspect and under the warmth something that freezes you."

I looked at the speaker. It was one of the attachés of the French embassy. A pale careworn-looking young man, with the uncertain glance and weak, tremulous mouth which one often observes in men who have more passion and self-will than intelligence. There was an air of great excitement about him as he spoke, and though he apparently sought to restrain himself, he did not succeed in doing so. The conversation still continued on this subject, but became so fast and loud, that I could no longer, without an effort of which I was incapable, continue to comprehend it. Every now and then, however, I caught such phrases as the following:

"Remember Barham," I heard one of them say; "Barham was one of her victims. You knew what promise he gave, what a splendid officer he was. She got possession of him while he was here waiting for despatches, drove him nearly mad with her sorceries and charms, and then woke him pitilessly from his dream."

"What became of him?"

"He joined his regiment, volunteered to serve in the trenches the very night he arrived out there, was all but fatally wounded, his leg shot off from the thigh, and is left now a mutilated cripple for life, heart broken, wrecked in the midst of his career, and all for her. And Needham; ah! if he could have spoken, he must have seen that fatal face smiling on the charge of the light brigade, and urging him on. I tell you, she has been the evil genius of the allied armies."

"Bless her, she's a little syren," I heard Caradoc say.

"Yes, syren truly, luring men to destruction by robbing them of their intelligence, their courage, their sense of duty by her wiles and fascinations. Woman to the waist—monster in all else."

"She befriends the French now," whispered another. "Heaven knows what devil's game she's up to now."

I left the table and went up to Caradoc's room, and for a while we were both too busy in asking and telling English news to think of anything else. We had not met for four years, and had been as intimate as brothers, so it was not surprising that we talked late, and I had not yet come to the end of my budget.

At last Caradoc pulled open his window. We were nearly suffocated from the smoke of our cigars.

"It is actually not far from sunrise," he said, as he pointed to the blood-red gleams which shot one after another into the grey sky from the east. "Good night, Paul. I am dead beat, and am going to have my night's rest now. Bless you, my dear fellow, you look as wide awake as if sleep was an abnormal condition of the species, to be dreaded like fever or apoplexy."

"I have lost the habit of it, I think, since——"

"I know," he said; "but I will bet anything you please that in a fortnight the Countess Irene makes you forget Lady Jane."

I smiled incredulously. "Man delights not me nor woman either."

"Come with me to the Austrian embassy to-night."

"I never go into society now," I said, resolutely. "I am sick of the shams, and the falsehoods, and the hypocrisies which form what is called polite society."

Caradoc smiled. "All right, old fellow; the proper thing to say with that Timon of Athens face, but every society wears its motley with a difference, and everything here is new to you. Bless us, our deceptions are on a broader scale than any *you* have ever met with. Come, by way of an experiment."

"Just as you like," I said. I was too lazy to discuss the matter, and we parted. I did not, however, take his advice and go to bed. I wrote for two or three hours in my own room, and then went out for a morning walk.

I left Pera and went on through gardens and detached houses into the country beyond. It was about six o'clock. As I passed *the iron gates* of a large house on my right,

four men coming out of it overtook me. They bore a litter with closed curtains. I stood aside to let them pass, and went on. I took a two hours' walk, and then retraced my steps. As I passed the house with the iron gates, I saw a few poor persons were collected in the road outside. Just at that moment the men with the litter returned with their burden. I saw the beggars close round the litter, and I heard quite a chorus of greetings and thanks. I did not understand the language, but there was no mistaking the tones.

I heard a sweet, mellow, woman's voice answering them. The bearers then turned inside the gates, which were instantly shut, but not before a magnificent black and tan spaniel had rushed in.

"Who is that?" I asked of the loiterers, who were still looking through the iron bars of the gate.

"Sorrow," was the answer.

"Sorrow?"

"Yes!"

I felt very much mystified, but in true English fashion preferred remaining so rather than hazard any more inquiries in a language I was unfamiliar with.

That evening I accompanied Caradoc to the Austrian ambassador's. He had fetched me as I sat brooding over my cigar, stretched full length on the sofa, in a state of misanthropic contentment, but he insisted on making me dress, and forced me to accompany him. The rooms were very full. I saw the French attaché leaning against the door as we entered the principal drawing-room, watching, as it seemed, for the arrival of some one, and watched, as I saw, by a plain, fair woman on the other side of the room.

"That's his wife," whispered Caradoc. "A good creature, but as jealous, bless her, as the deuce. They have only been married a year, and I know he wishes himself unmarried a hundred times a day. He is an American. Her family—the Mertons—are also here. They have the next house to this. Pleasant people."

I was, I confess, in spite of my Hamletism, both interested and amused. There was so much animation; such a vivid stir of life pervaded the whole atmosphere; every one in this circle was living in the fullest sense of the word. I found some old acquaintances, and exchanged greetings with them. I observed that the Frenchman still stood at his post. As I mingled with the different groups, I heard much astonishment and more regret expressed at

the non-arrival of some expected lady. There was quite a buzz of inquiries about her, and great disappointment seemed felt at the answers to these inquiries.

"Who are they expecting?" I asked of Caradoc, as I stood beside him for a moment.

"The Mermaid, of course." He passed on without saying anything more.

The large windows of the reception-room were open to the ground, and I strolled out into the beautifully illuminated gardens.

I sauntered about for a while and followed a side-path which was less lighted than the rest of the garden. It was bordered by beautiful plants, and I found myself walking on out of the region of light into a realm of soft darkness through which the moonshiny face of some white rose appeared with misty and ghost-like aspect. The stars were gleaming with a veiled lustre through the interlaced branches overhead. I came at last to a gate. It was open. I passed through into a path, at the end of which was a kiosk. As I walked towards it a dog suddenly rushed out from the interior, barking furiously, and making a most noisy demonstration by way of defence against my aggression.

I tried to quiet him, but it was in vain. Every step I made in advance he became more and more enraged, and would certainly have attacked me more energetically still, when a bell rang hastily from the interior of the little summer-house, which I had now reached. The dog stopped his barks and growls, listened, and as the bell was heard again sprang back, and nestled down by a low couch which I could now distinguish as I stood on the threshold.

A small alabaster lamp hung from the pointed roof of the kiosk, and its light fell on a face of great beauty below it. Supported by pillows, in almost a sitting attitude, a lady was propped up on this couch. Over the couch, and completely concealing her limbs from the waist, was a coverlet of shining bluish-white satin embroidered in crescents of mother-of-pearl. Soft glittering golden hair hung loose and bright over the pillows, and framed a pale but lovely face. In the lamp-light the face looked like one of the white roses I had passed.

"Pardon, madame," I said.

"I must beg yours," she said, in correct but foreign English. "I am afraid my dog attacked you."

"He is a very good guardian," I replied; "but I had no idea I was intruding on any one as I was pursuing my solitary walk."

"I came here for a little fresh air; when

I am not well there is something soothing in this silence and solitude, listening to the echoes from the voices and music yonder.

At that moment, even as she spoke, a burst of joyous melody was wafted on the night breeze to our ears.

"Is it not lovely?" she said, as she clasped her white hands together with delight like a child's. "Yes, music is the best part of all our festivals. Do you like music?"

"Yes, do you?"

"I love it too much," she sighed, and leaned back; "but then I have been deprived of it for years."

"You would hear it better from the house."

"No, I am best here."

By this time the dog crept out from under the couch, and judging from the length of our dialogue that my presence was not hateful to his mistress, began reconnoitring me from a little distance, and then trotted up and licked my hand.

"He has made friends with you."

"He feels that I am not so suspicious a character as I seem."

"He has great physiognomical quickness, and if he trusts you, you may take it as a compliment."

"I hope, therefore, that with the certificate of his approval you will pardon my intrusion."

"Certainly."

I made my bow, for I heard steps approaching. The French secretary bustled by me as I passed on to the house, and as I turned round I saw he was making his way through the garden to the kiosk. I did not see Caradoc again that evening, but as we were breakfasting the next morning, I asked him if he knew the lady I had been talking with the previous evening. I described her appearance and her dog.

"What," said he, "have you already made acquaintance with the Countess Irene?"

I could not for the life of me help a slight quickening of the pulse as I asked, "Who is the Countess Irene?"

"She is a lady staying with the Mertons, a rich American family here. They live next door to the Austrian Minister, or rather the gardens are side by side."

"She is a foreigner?"

"Yes, a Swede, or may be a Russian, bless her. Her family name is Vassilli. It tells nothing of her nationality. She calls herself a cosmopolitan."

"She seems a great invalid."

"Yes, there are the most romantic stories afloat about her."

"Married, or a widow?"

"Married, but separated from her husband. It is supposed that some ill-treatment from him caused her infirmity—a spinal injury. She is paralysed."

"Good Heaven!"

"A thousand pities, is it not? What she would be, however, if she had the full use of her limbs, it is impossible to imagine, for there can hardly be anything more active, more energetic, more zealous and persevering than she is in her present condition. She does double or treble the work of any ordinary woman. I fancy there would be rather too much of it, if she were as able-bodied as she is restless and quick-witted—she and Sorrow."

"Sorrow!"

"I forgot for the moment that you were so new a comer into these parts as not to know that she has given her dog as odd a name as people give her. She is popularly called The Mermaid, and she calls her dog Sorrow."

I now understood that the lady was the Mermaid, respecting whom I had heard that broken talk at the table-d'hôte.

"What is her condition?" I asked.

"That is exactly what one can never realise. Her eyes are so bright, her brain so busy, her hands so active, that one feels inclined to suspect it is only a temporary caprice that keeps her on that couch; that instead of having lost the use of her limbs, she is only remaining quiet till her wings are full grown, there is so much of the 'Psyche, my soul,' about her. But the consequence is, that there is also a good deal of disappointment to be gone through on her account, and the headlong admirers of to-day are often changed into the bitter detractors of to-morrow; but you will never find two or three persons gathered together in Constantinople without hearing her name. It is certain that those who know her best love her most. The Mertons met her at Ems, and were so fascinated by her that, finding she was coming south for her health, they invited her to join them, and thus it came about that they live together. The Mertons and Madame de Beaufort, their daughter, are as the opposite poles, however, respecting the countess. Madame de Beaufort hates her; Monsieur de Beaufort is her devoted admirer, which may be at the bottom of it, perhaps."

Three months passed away, and I was

still at Constantinople. The news from the seat of war was most fluctuating and contradictory, and it is possible that we who were supposed to be at the head-quarters of information knew less than was known in England and France. Never was there such a cradle of serpent intrigues as Constantinople at that time, and there was no Hercules to strangle them. Check and counter-check, thrust and feint and parry, were the order of the day.

I was interested in it all, but I did not dare, all at once, to whisper to myself that there was one being who interested me more than aught else. The day after our first meeting I had been formally introduced to the Countess Irene, and since then I had seen her repeatedly.

I had kept a little aloof at first, but my grave, distant manner seemed to please her, and she frankly showed it. I am sure it was a relief to her to meet with a man who talked to her without any flighty raptures. I was so disinterested, too, in all the diplomatic fencing going on, that it gave, I know, a zest to all our conversations. We talked about books, not gossip.

I found her highly cultivated, but with the cultivation of a person who had educated herself. She would astonish me with pretty ignorances, and then suddenly make me marvel still more at her knowledge.

"I am afraid," she would say, laughingly, "that what I have learned has not assimilated with my mental constitution. In some respects my mind is in an atrophy, in others it is plethoric."

"But you are so young to have devoted yourself to such studies."

"Young? In years I am eight-and-twenty, in heart I am seventy-eight, and in temperament sixteen."

It was these contrasts which made her so winning.

She had the most mobile face I have ever seen. Large dark-blue eyes, with at times a violet, at times a steely iron-grey, tinge in them, small regular features, and a glory of golden hair. This hair was quite unearthly in its lightness and brightness. It was a glittering fleece; it was a flake of spun glass; it was an aureole powdered with diamond-dust! It seemed to have spring and volition of its own, and either hung round her shoulders like a sunlit cloud, or wreathed round her head like a nimbus.

She was carried on her couch into the drawing-rooms of the houses where she visited, and this couch was always the

centre of attraction in the room. Something more than the superficial courtesy of society was shown to her. Her misfortunes invested her with a pathos which inspired tenderness towards her in all who approached her.

Women—Madame de Beaufort always excepted—adored her. They petted her and worshipped her, and listened to her as to an oracle. She received their confidences with the softest sympathy and the most genial interest, though I have seen at such times a shade of melancholy overspread her perfect face, as if she could not but contrast her miserable fate with theirs. The unquenchable desires of life and youth were still living in her brain and heart, but the passionate soul was imprisoned in a dead body. No one ever heard a complaint from her lips. She was eagerly interested in public news, and attachés and secretaries would throng around her bringing her the latest intelligence, and it was said that even the greatest diplomatic authorities did not disdain pausing by her couch when present at any entertainment where she was, to listen to her animated and suggestive remarks.

I often met her during my early walks, and soon she permitted me to walk sometimes beside her litter, or to take Sorrow for a run while she and her bearers rested.

"How fond my dog is of you, Mr. Eden," she said, one day.

"Yes, and I like him, too. I like everything about him but his name."

She sighed as I said this.

"How could you," I continued—"you who are so simple and genuine in everything—give him such a name?"

"Why do you dislike it?"

"Because there is a false sentiment in it which jars on me."

"False sentiment? Surely everything belonging to me——"

"Why do you check yourself?"

"I do not like speaking of myself."

"Did you give him his name?"

"No!"

"Then pray change it."

"I cannot do that."

"Was the name given to him by some one you love?"

"Yes."

A faint blush rose to her temples, and her eyes deepened into blue as a tender reverential expression rose in them. After my question and her monosyllabic answer there was silence between us. The air seemed suddenly to have become chill; she

dropped the curtains of her litter, and we parted at the gates of the Mertons' house.

I thought I was getting a little tired of Constantinople, for I felt very dull all that day.

In the evening I intended to stay at home, but was persuaded by Caradoc to go with him to the French attaché's. I did not tell myself that I consented the more readily that his was almost the only house in Pera where I knew I should not meet the Countess Irene.

M. de Beaufort had a private fortune of his own, and, though he occupied no very high rank in diplomacy, was able to live in good deal of luxurious style in this most barbaric and yet expensive capital.

The rooms were well arranged and spacious, but the unhappiness and division between the husband and wife had impressed itself upon everything around them. On entering it, one felt that the atmosphere of the place was dreary and harsh.

Both husband and wife had a worn, repressed look. The two sat in the same room, only a table's width apart, but their hearts, their thoughts, their feelings, were evidently wide asunder.

The company had broken up into little knots and were scattered about the room. They were speaking of some changes in the corps diplomatique, then of some rumours of bad news from Sebastopol, some faint whisperings of differences of opinion as to the termination of the war—further off than ever according to some, imminent as to others.

"What is your opinion, madame?" said some one, addressing Madame de Beaufort.

"I scarcely venture to give it," she said.

"It would be difficult to unravel the intrigues on every side, or to obtain a clue as to the probable result of it all. Of one thing I am satisfied, that Russian spies and Russian machinations are everywhere."

Presently De Beaufort went out, and the visitors began to leave.

Some one asked for the master of the house.

"He has gone to the Mertons."

A faint smile might be read on some of the faces in spite of the usual settled vacuity of expression habitual to them.

"Are you going?" I asked Madame de Beaufort, more by way of filling up an uncomfortable silence, than from any other motive.

"No. But doubtless *you* are going to mamma's reception to-night?"

"I am not indeed."

"No? You amaze me!"

Madame de Beauport was a plain woman, but she had steadfast honest eyes, and she now raised them to mine with a quick inquiring glance. She had leaped to the conclusion that I was désillusionné as to Irene. By this time we were alone.

"Do you not at last agree with me that papa and mamma have been grossly deceived?" she asked me.

"Pardon me, by no means."

"You are right to be cautious," she retorted, with provoking scorn in her tone.

"Why should I be cautious?"

"Who knows?" she answered petulantly. "There may be listeners; we may be overheard. I never feel safe, even in my own house. I trust it may be reserved to me to unmask one of the most infamous hypocrites the world has ever been deceived by." She said this in a subdued voice; but she clasped her hands, and the water came to her eyes with the energy with which she spoke.

Her manner and tone appalled me. I had tried to speak as if in jest, but there was a deadly vehemence about her which made the jest pointless. Detective? She was more like a Nemesis than anything else.

Good God! how little I dreamed what would be the final result of her suspicions.

The result of this dialogue was to efface the temporary irritation against Irene which our little discussion as to her dog's name had caused. I felt I could have laid down my life to attest the truth and purity of hers. As Balzac, with his profound knowledge of human nature, makes one of his heroes say of a calumniated heroine, "I will love her more and more to compensate to her for all those who have misjudged her and blamed her."

The next morning we did not take our usual walk, for by some accident I was later than usual, and the Countess Irene had already been carried down to one of the ships in the harbour when I reached her house. She was in the habit of sometimes varying her morning excursions by going on board one or other of the numerous vessels stationed at Constantinople at that time. It was good for her health to remain for an hour or two on deck, inhaling the

sea breezes. She went by daybreak, and returned for the Mertons' breakfast hour. I sometimes accompanied her, but this morning, as I stood on the steps of the quay, I saw the boat with the litter in it had reached the man-of-war she intended to visit that morning. A gleam of the early sunlight fell on her glittering coverlet as she was borne up in the arms of the sailors. There were some idlers standing by me. Their eyes had caught the same glimmer. One poor fellow uncovered himself and muttered in the lingua Franca of the place something which sounded very like a prayer. The others spoke with great feeling about her. There was a single-hearted fervour of gratitude in their expressions which showed how great had been her kindness to them. She had built a hospital, and established more than one school in Constantinople since her arrival.

"God has afflicted her," said one; "but if the day of miracles be not passed, and our priest tells us it has never passed and will never pass, she will be healed, for I never forget her in my prayers."

"At any rate," said another, "being as she is, we can all take care of her and help her."

They were rough sailors who thus spoke, but their voices were very tender.

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VERONICA.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE."
IN FIVE BOOKS.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER XI. SIR JOHN IS DISCUSSED.

DURING the first four or five years of Maud Desmond's stay at Shipley, Lady Tallis had written several times to Mr. Levincourt, asking news of her niece, and pouring out tidings of her own troubles and injuries in long, tangled skeins of sentences, wherein verbs and their nominative cases were involved together in inextricable confusion. Moreover, as she wrote with very pale ink, on very thin paper, and crossed each page of writing, the trouble of deciphering her epistles speedily became a greater one than Mr. Levincourt was willing to give himself.

Her ladyship's mode of expressing herself was singularly enigmatical. This did not arise from any intention of being mysterious, but simply from what the vicar styled "puzzle-headedness," and from a conception of the grammatical construction of the English language considerably at variance with the best authorities.

Lady Tallis invariably wrote of her husband as "he." This was intelligible until some other male individual requiring the same personal pronoun appeared in the letter. But when that other individual—whichever he might be—had to be mentioned, the difficulty of distinguishing the "he's" became considerable.

Add to this that every word which could be abbreviated was cut down to two or three letters: "which" became wh, "your" yr, "morning" mrg, and so forth. As though time and letter-paper were so

inestimably precious to the writer that they must be economised at all hazards. Though, in truth, she had quite as much both of the one and the other as she knew what to do with.

Mr. Levincourt would glance at the beginning and the end, and then would fold up the letter, saying to himself, as he placed it in his desk, that he would read it carefully "by-and-by."

As years went on the communications between Lady Tallis and the family at the vicarage grew rarer and rarer. Her ladyship was travelling about. The town-house was let on a long lease. Her address was uncertain. It became more and more apparent—or would have become so, to any one taking the trouble to consider the poor lady's epistles with patience and sympathy—that her married life was wretched. She would, she said, very gladly have received her niece for a while, but "circumstances forbade her doing so." What those circumstances were, the vicar knew with tolerable accuracy.

Veronica, too, had learned from her mother more of Lady Tallis's history than was known to Maud. Mrs. Levincourt had often expressed her contempt for Lady Tallis's weakness in submitting to be crushed and tyrannised over by her husband, and had said that the woman must be an imbecile!

Veronica was inclined to think so too.

Occasionally Maud had spoken of her aunt to the vicar. "I should like to see Aunt Hilda," she had said. "She is the only one left of dear mamma's relatives. And I know mamma loved her very much."

Then the vicar had explained that although Mrs. Desmond loved her sister, she by no means loved or esteemed her sister's husband: and that there was no possibility

of Maud's desire to see her aunt being gratified, unless Lady Tallis should come to Shipley-in-the-Wold.

Once Maud had said a few words to Veronica on the subject.

"I can understand plainly," said she, "that poor Aunt Hilda is very harshly treated, and very much to be pitied. During dear mamma's life-time, I was, of course, too mere a child to know anything about it. I remember once, Aunt Hilda came to see mamma; and she cried and talked very excitedly, and mamma sent me out of the room."

"I think," answered Veronica, "that Lady Tallis's history may be summed up in a few words. She was good-natured and weak. Her husband was bad-natured and strong. Ecco!"

"But I wonder why he does not love her! Aunt Hilda had beauty and gentle birth and a kind sweet nature."

"I believe, Maud, that men love what amuses them. Now it is possible to be handsome, and well-born, and good-natured, and yet to bore people to death."

When, during the first day of her stay at Lowater House, Maud discovered that Mr. Lockwood knew her aunt, she asked him many questions about her.

"I am unfortunately not able to tell you as much of Lady Tallis as my mother would be," answered Hugh Lockwood.

"Mrs. Lockwood and my aunt were quite intimate, were they not?"

"They lived in the same boarding house at Torquay for some time. My mother was an invalid, and had been advised to go to Devonshire for the winter. Lady Tallis was there alone; so was my mother; and they found each other's society more congenial than that of the rest of the people in the house."

"And Aunt Hilda was quite alone?"

"Quite alone. At first we supposed her to be a widow; but after a short time she became very confidential with my mother, and explained that her husband was still living, but that—that—her marriage was not a fortunate or happy one. You must understand, Miss Desmond," proceeded Hugh, seeing Maud's countenance fall, and the colour flush into her cheek, "that Lady Tallis volunteered this statement. My mother, however, has a singular power of winning confidence. It has more than once happened to her to receive the most curious particulars of their private history, from almost total strangers. I think that if you knew her, you would not distrust her."

"I never distrust people," answered Maud, looking up candidly into his face. Then a thought came into her mind, and she added hastily, "Not quite, ~~never~~; of course I am bound in conscience to own that there are some faces, and especially some voices, which inspire me with distrust; perhaps unjustly."

She was sitting alone with her hostess next evening before dinner. The twilight still struggled with the blaze of the fire. It was that peaceful hour between day and night, when old people are apt to dream of the past, and young people of the future.

"Maud," said Mrs. Sheardown, "do you know when your guardian's guest is to take his departure?"

"Not certainly. As soon as he was well enough to travel, he said, when I left the vicarage. That is vague, of course. But I should think he might go by this time."

"That sounds a little like 'I wish he would go.'"

"Does it?"

"You don't like this Sir John Gale, Maud. Have you any reason for not liking him, or has he one of those faces or voices which inspire you with distrust? I'll make a confession, Maud. I have a strange distrust of this man, and with less excuse than you; for I have never spoken to, nor even seen, him. It is one of what I call my presentiments, and what Tom calls my unreasonable feminine prejudices! I wish the man were fairly away out of the vicarage. Does Mr. Levincourt like him?"

"Very much. Uncle Charles finds him amusing, and able to talk upon subjects which my guardian seldom has an opportunity of discussing."

"And Miss Levincourt—does she like him too?"

"Oh— Yes: I think so."

"That he admires her, is a matter of course. She is very handsome."

"Veronica has the most beautiful face I know."

"Yes, she is strikingly handsome. Our young friend, Hugh Lockwood, was quite captivated by her beauty the other evening."

"Yes."

"I warned him not to burn his wings, for I do not think a poor man would have much chance with Miss Levincourt."

"N—no—I don't know."

"I don't say that she would be deliberately mercenary—only—only I don't think she would happen to fall in love with a poor man."

"Dear Mrs. Sheardown, I always cite you as one of the most just persons I know. But—don't be angry with me—I do think you are a little unjust to Veronica."

"Am I? I will try not to be, Maudie."

"It would seem presumptuous in me to talk to you in this way, only that I, of course, know Veronica so thoroughly. She has fine qualities; indeed she has."

"She has, at all events, one good quality, which I am willing to admit; she is fond of you, I truly believe."

"Indeed she is, Mrs. Sheardown. And you don't know how I try her. I lecture her and scold her sometimes, terribly. And you know I am two years younger than she is. And yet she bears it all so well. I am sure that if Veronica loved only flatterers, she would detest me."

"Who is it that does not detest Miss Desmond?" demanded Captain Sheardown, entering the room at this moment with Mr. Hugh Lockwood.

"Never mind," returned his wife; "the reference you heard on coming in concerned neither you nor Mr. Lockwood."

"We have been to Shipley-in-the-Wold, Nelly."

"What took you to Shipley-in-the-Wold?"

"Captain Sheardown was kind enough to go, partly on my account," said Hugh. "I wanted to have a look at the church there; and as we are to go to Danecester for the Sunday service at the cathedral, I thought I might not have another opportunity of seeing St. Gildas, which is curious, and very complete in its way."

"Had I known we were going to Shipley, Miss Desmond," said the captain, "I should have asked if you had any commands to give me. But we only made up our minds to push on when we were already a good mile on the road. This young gentleman found my description of St. Gildas's church irresistibly attractive. He was rather disappointed when I told him I was going to call at the vicarage. But he consoled himself with the hope that Miss Levincourt might not be at home."

"I assure you, Mrs. Sheardown," said Hugh, turning to his hostess with a vehement earnestness that made her smile: "I assure you that I did not even know, until we were within sight of the vicarage house, that Miss Levincourt lived there! If I had been told, I had forgotten."

"Did you see Uncle Charles?" asked Maud of Captain Sheardown.

"No; there was no one at home. The

vicar was at Haymoor on parish business, and Miss Levincourt was out walking."

"Then," continued Maud, "you did not see Veronica?"

"Stop a bit! We had left our cards at the vicarage, and had walked to St. Gildas and thoroughly inspected that very squat specimen of Saxon architecture—oh yes, I dare say it isn't Saxon at all, Hugh, but never mind!—Miss Desmond does not know any better!—and we were crossing the churchyard, when whom should we see but Miss Levincourt and Sir—Sir—what is the man's name?"

"Sir John Gale," said his wife, gravely.

"Of course! Sir John Gale! Hugh saw them first."

"Miss Levincourt wore a red cloak, and the colour caught my eye," Hugh explained.

"Something caught your eye? Yes, and fixed it, moreover! For it was your intense gaze that made me look in the direction of the common. And there I saw Miss Levincourt and Sir Thingumbob strolling along arm-in-arm."

"The dressing-bell has rang, Tom," said Mrs. Sheardown, rising from her chair.

"All right, Nelly. But I was surprised to see such a young-looking man! I fancied he was quite an old fogey!"

"No;" said Maud, "he is not what one would call an old fogey. Did Veronica see you, Captain Sheardown?"

"We walked half across the common to have the honour of accosting Miss Levincourt. Hugh sacrificed his inclination to a sense of politeness. Miss Veronica received us very graciously, wanted us to go back to the vicarage; but Sir John looked uncommonly black. I don't think he half liked being interrupted in his tête-à-tête. And upon my word——"

"Please go and dress, Tom," interrupted Mrs. Sheardown. "And you, too, Mr. Lockwood. You will both be late, as it is."

While the captain was finishing his toilet, his wife came into his dressing-room, and said, "Oh you blundering, tiresome Tom!"

"What have I done now?" asked Captain Sheardown, wheeling round with a huge hair-brush in each hand.

"I didn't want you to talk about that man before Maud."

"What man?"

"That Sir John Gale."

"Why upon earth shouldn't I?"

"Well, it does not so much matter your speaking about him, as coupling his name

with Veronica's. It makes Maud uneasy. I always knew Veronica to be a flirt; but, upon my word, I think her conduct with this man passes all limits. What is the vicar about? He knows nothing whatever of this man with whom he lets his daughter wander about the country."

"Gently, Nelly! They were not wandering about the country. They were taking an afternoon stroll within sight of her father's house."

"It's all the same!"

"Not quite, my dear."

"Tom, would you like your daughter to do so?"

"My dear Nelly, if you are speaking seriously——"

"Quite seriously."

"Then, seriously, I think you are making a mountain of a molehill. The man is not a pleasant-looking fellow, though I suppose he is handsome after a fashion. Neither was he particularly civil in his manner. I dare say he thinks himself a very magnificent three-tailed bashaw. But, after all, neither his looks nor his manners constitute a crime. And if the vicar and his daughter are satisfied, I don't think we have any business to object."

"Why should Sir John Gale linger at Shipley? He is quite well enough to travel. Maud was saying——"

"Oh, it is Maud who has been putting this into your head?"

"No. But she distrusts and dislikes the man. I am not fond of Veronica Levincourt, but I cannot help feeling that I ought to hold out a hand of womanly help to her—ought to give her a word of counsel. The girl is motherless, and in spite of all her self-confidence, we must remember that she is but nineteen. I wish I had invited her here with Maud! But, to say the truth, I was afraid of Hugh Lockwood getting entangled by her. He was greatly taken with her beauty. And her love of admiration would lead her to encourage him without the smallest compunction."

"Well, my dear child," said the captain, "this Sir John Gale will be gone in a few days and——"

"Is he going?"

"Yes, to be sure! Oh I forgot to tell you. His man—a little foreign fellow, who opened the door to us at the vicarage—said that his master would be leaving Shipley at the end of the week."

"Oh how relieved and glad I am! You stupid boy, not to tell me that, the very *first thing*!"

"So you see, you need not attempt the very disagreeable duty of giving a word of counsel to Miss Levincourt."

"Disagreeable enough! And ten to one I should have done no good by it. Well, Sir John is going, and it is all smooth. Maud will be delighted to get rid of him."

"I cannot understand why you two should take such a hatred to the man, though! As for you, Mrs. Nelly, you know simply nothing whatever about him. He may be a model of manly virtue for anything you can tell."

"I hardly think that a boon companion of Lord George Segrave's is likely to be that! But I am willing to allow him every virtue under the sun if he will only relieve Shipley vicarage of his presence."

"There's the dinner-bell. Come along, you illogical, prejudiced, unreasonable—dear little woman!"

CHAPTER XII. THE VICAR IS NOT ALARMED.

RAIN, rain, rain! It poured down on the open roads. It plashed and dripped from gutter and gargoyle. It sank deep into the miry uplands, and covered the marsh-rushes on the wide flats with beaded pearls.

The sun went down amid clouds that looked like dun smoke reddened by the reflex of a distant conflagration.

Splash, splash, from the slated eaves came the water-drops on to the evergreens outside the sitting-room window at Shipley vicarage. Splash, splash, splash!

The log hissed in the chimney. They always crowned their coal fire with a log of wood at the vicarage of an evening. It was a custom which Stella Levincourt had brought with her from foreign parts. She said she liked the smell of the wood.

Not that the pungent, acrid odour was grateful in her nostrils; not that the blue flame leaped brighter than the deep glow from the steady coal; no; not for these reasons did the economical housewife (who had learned to cherish a sixpence with the lingering grip that had been wont to caress her Tuscan paul) insist on the extravagance of a log of wood upon the evening fire.

It was the memory of her youth that she loved, and to which she offered this burnt-sacrifice. Phantoms of old days revisited her in the pale grey smoke that curled up on her hearth-stone, like the smoke of the Tuscan fires, far away.

And the custom survived her. It was continued on the same ostensible ground as that on which she had commenced it.

The vicar "liked the smell of the wood." Veronica "thought the bright flame so much prettier than the nasty coal-gas, that flared, and glared, and scorched one."

The vicar of Shipley-in-the-Wold sat alone by his hearth. He was depressed, and a little out of humour. His guest had left him, and the vicar missed his evening chat.

Maud was still at Lowater, and Veronica had gone to pay a long-promised visit to old Mrs. Plew, the surgeon's mother.

"Mrs. Plew has asked me to drink tea with her so often," Veronica had said. "I ought to go. I will walk over there after the afternoon practice in the school-room."

The vicar had made no opposition at the time. But now that he was alone, he began to think himself hardly used. Veronica could stay at home, evening after evening, while there was a stranger in the house. But she cared nothing for her father's society. She never considered that he might feel solitary. She had declared herself to be moped to death, and so had gone out to seek a change. Selfish, selfish! How selfish and inconsiderate people were!

Splash, splash, splash, fell the drops from the slates of the roof. On the garden the spring rain was falling, fine and close. Now and again came the west wind, flying fast, and with a swoop of his wings scattered the trembling drops, and dashed them against the window-panes.

Each time that the vicar heard the rain pattering against the glass he looked up from his book and moved uneasily in his chair. Sometimes he stirred the fire. Sometimes he moved his reading lamp. Once he rose, went to the window, drew back the curtains and put his face close to the glass. There was not much to be seen. As his eyes got used to the darkness he could distinguish the outline of the old yew-tree, solidly black, against the vague, shadow-like clouds. A wet stormy night! How would Veronica get home? Joe Dowsett had gone to Shipley Magna to buy corn, or the vicar would have made him take a mackintosh and waterproof shoes to his young mistress. He could not send either of the women out in this weather. Then he sighed, and went back to his chair and his book.

In the kitchen old Joanna was knitting a coarse grey stocking, feeling rather than seeing her work, and Catherine, with the solitary candle drawn close to her, was trimming a smart cap.

"How solitary like the house seems

now!" exclaimed the latter, after having plied her needle for some time in silence.

"Quiet," responded Joanna, briefly.

"Oh, quiet enough! But for that matter it warn't never noisy. I like a little life in a place. Somehow, Sir John being here, and Paul, livened us up a bit."

"You've a queer notion of liveliness, Catherine. It was more like deadliness a deal for one while! And very nigh *being* deadliness too." The old woman nodded her head in grim satisfaction at her joke.

"Well, but there was something going on all the time. Not but what Paul gave us little enough of his company: and as for Sir John, I didn't hardly set eyes on him from week's end to week's end."

"No great loss neither!"

"Laws, Joanna, why are you so set agin' Sir John? I'm sure he was quite a handsome-looking gentleman for his time of life. And behaved handsome too, when he went away."

"My liking ain't to be bought with guineas. Nor yet with five-pound notes."

"Well," observed Catherine, reflectively, "I think guineas helps liking. I hate stingy folks."

"You're young and foolish. It's a pity as wisdom and judgment mostly comes when folks hasn't no more need on 'em."

There was another and a longer silence, during which the wind rose higher, and the rain rattled against the casement.

"We shall have Miss Maud back to-morrow, I suppose," said Catherine. "She's a nice young lady: only a bit high. I don't mean high exactly, neither: but—she has a kind of way of keeping you at a distance somehow. Miss Veronica's more to my taste."

"H'm!" grunted out old Joanna, with closed lips.

"She's a bit overbearing sometimes," pursued Catherine. "But then she has such pleasant ways with her when she is in a good humour."

"Did ye ever remember Miss Veronica taking any trouble about you? I don't mean *telling somebody else to take trouble* and her getting the credit of being very kind and generous for it! But right-down putting of herself out of the way for you quietly, where there was no show-off in the matter? Because I've know'd her ever since she was born, and I can't call such a thing to mind."

Catherine opined under her breath that Joanna was "crusty" to-night.

The old woman's ears were quick enough

to catch the words, and she answered, emphatically, "No, Catherine; you're mistaken. It ain't crustiness as makes me speak as I spoke then. But I'm nigh upon fifty year longer in the world than you. And I've seen a deal of people, high and low. I'd do more for that young lass than you would. But, all the same, I read her as plain as print. I tell you, it makes me sorry to see her sometimes."

"Sorry! What for?"

"What for? Well, there's no need to say whether it's for this or for that; but I am sorry to see a young creature with no more religion than a heathen—Lord forgive me!—and her head turned with vanity and vain-glory, and caring for nothing but show-off and being admired. I tell you, if Miss Veronica was sent to live among black Indians, she'd paint herself blacker than any of 'em, if that was what they considered handsome. Ah, deary me, Catherine, child! don't get to think too much of that rosy face of yours. It is pretty now. You needn't plume yourself up. God made it, and he didn't make it to last very long."

"There's the door-bell!" said Catherine, jumping up, not unwilling to escape from Joanna's moralising.

In a few minutes the hall-door was shut heavily, and almost immediately afterwards the vicar rang his bell.

"Was that Miss Veronica?" he asked, as the girl entered the room.

"No, sir; it was Jemmy Sack, sir. He brought a message from my young lady to say as she wouldn't be home to-night."

"Not be home to-night?"

"No, sir. Jemmy Sack saw Miss Veronica at the school-house, and she bad him say, as it threatened rain, she should very likely stay at Mrs. Plew's for the night. And you wasn't to be alarmed, please sir."

"Alarmed! No, of course I am not alarmed. But—Where is Jemmy? Is he gone?"

"Yes, sir; he's gone. He wouldn't hardly stay long enough to give his message. He was running down with rain."

"Ha! It is raining still, then, is it?"

"Pouring, sir. And the wind beats the rain against your face so as I couldn't hardly shut the door."

"Let me know when Joe Dowsett comes back."

"Yes, sir."

"What o'clock is it?"

"After eight. I looked at the kitchen clock just afore I came up-stairs."

When Catherine related to her fellow-

servant what had passed, the old woman shook her head.

"Ah," said she, "that's the way. The strange face is gone. There's nobody at home to amuse my lady, so off she goes to make a fool of that soft-hearted little surgeon, that would just lay down and let her walk over him, if she had a mind to."

"But, Joanna, it's a real bad night. I don't wonder as she didn't like the walk home, all along that sloppy lane, or through the churchyard, as is worse a deal, and lonesomer."

"It ain't sloppiness, nor yet churchyards that could keep Miss Veronica if she wanted to come. And, what's more, if Miss Maud had been at home she wouldn't have stayed at old Mrs. Plew's. For Miss Maud she do take her up pretty short about her goings on with that soft little man. If there's anybody on God's earth as Veronica minds, or looks up to, it's Miss Desmond. And I've wished more than once lately that Miss Maud hadn't been away this fortnight."

"Why?" asked Catherine, gazing with open-mouthed curiosity at Joanna.

"Well, it's no matter. I may ha' been wrong, or I may ha' been right; but all's well that ends well, as the saying goes."

And with this oracular response Catherine was fain to content herself.

THE ATLANTIC YACHT RACE.

It was not an ancient mariner—it was, on the contrary, a rather young and inexperienced mariner—who suggested the ocean yacht race in 1866. At a dinner in New York (all of the company being members of the New York Yacht Club), the discussion happened to turn upon the sea-worthiness of centre-board boats, or boats fitted with a false movable keel. Thereupon, Mr. Peter Lorillard offered to match his centre-board yacht, the *Vesta*, against Mr. George Osgood's keel yacht, the *Fleetwing*, for a race across the Atlantic. In order to more thoroughly test the question whether centre-board yachts could sail only in smooth water, the race was fixed for the month of December, when rough weather upon the Atlantic is a certainty. The match having been made, Mr. Bennett asked to be allowed to enter his yacht, the *Henrietta*, for the race, and this request was at once granted. The joint stakes amounted to one hundred thousand dollars in greenbacks—about sixteen thousand pounds—and were duly deposited in the hands of the stakeholders. Mr. William M'Vickar, then commodore of the yacht club, consented to cross to England in a steamer, await the arrival of the competitors, and act as referee for the race. It was further arranged that the race should be sailed according to the yacht club regulations concerning canvas and

ballast; and that each yacht should carry two judges to certify that these regulations were strictly observed. Sandy Hook, New York, was to be the starting-point: the Needles, off the Isle of Wight, the winning-post.

At first the American press roundly denounced the proposed race as a foolhardy undertaking, almost sure to end in the drowning of all concerned. Such gloomy prognostications, however, only increased the public interest in the event; and, as the time for the race approached, the popular excitement vented itself in tremendous wagers, only to be paralleled by the betting in England upon the Derby. The Fleetwing was decidedly and justly the favourite; the Vesta being entirely untried at sea, and the Henrietta being regarded as very slow, though perfectly seaworthy. In their previous performances, the Vesta had beaten the Fleetwing, and both had outsailed the Henrietta. To an inexperienced eye there seemed very little differences in their build and rigging. Their burdens, too, were very nearly equal, the Fleetwing registering two hundred and twelve tons, the Henrietta two hundred and five, and the Vesta two hundred and one, American measurement. By the English system of measurement this tonnage would be largely increased. Some difficulty was experienced in securing seamen to cross the Atlantic in such vessels and in such weather. The men were willing enough to engage, but their mothers, wives, and sweethearts interfered, and persuaded them not to sign articles. Moved by such feminine solicitations, the picked crew of the Henrietta deserted her, a few days before the start, and their places had to be supplied by a lot of land-lubbers, few of whom could climb a mast. To make up for a similar deficiency on board the Fleetwing, half a dozen merchant captains volunteered for the voyage, and those brave fellows were, unfortunately, the very men whom Neptune doomed to death. To find the necessary complement of judges for the yachts was also not an easy matter. Invitations to prominent yachtsmen were declined for various reasons, and the gentlemen who finally served in this capacity were almost all volunteers. Messrs. Lorillard and Osgood, the owners of the Vesta and the Fleetwing, were detained at home by business, and reluctantly relinquished their intention of sailing their own yachts in the race. Thus it happened that, although the Henrietta was an outsider in the original match, although she had the reputation of being slow, and although she was very ill manned, yet the people suddenly made her their pet, and loudly hoped that she would win, because Mr. Bennett adhered to his determination to sail in her. Public sympathy was unanimously with "the only man who goes in his own boat."

On the morning of the eleventh of December, 1866, the three yachts lay off Staten Island ready to start. They had been very carefully equipped. The trip was estimated to occupy about twenty days; but the yachts were provisioned for at

least two months. Up to the last moment hampers of provisions, boxes of wine and spirits, cigars, and all sorts of comforts and luxuries were sent on board by anxious friends. The day was clear, cold, and bright; the ice was forming in the harbour; and the wind was as westerly as could be desired. All the flags in New York City were flying; the wharves were crowded with spectators; the harbour was dotted with excursion steamers. At seven o'clock A.M. the dark blue racing flag of the Henrietta was displayed, and the yachts were taken in tow by tugs to be drawn to their starting stations. From this time no communication was permitted between the yachts and the shore: partly to prevent any further difficulties in regard to the crews: and partly because several kind but frightened friends had conceived the idea of subpoenaing some of the yachtsmen as witnesses in trials of which they knew nothing, in order to preserve them from the perils of the sea. As the yachts were towed down the Narrows, followed by scores of steamers, propellers, sail-boats, and pilot-boats, the enthusiasm was absolutely painful to those on board, and it was a relief when the calling of the roll came to distract their overstrained feelings. In the Fleetwing sailed Messrs. Centre and Staples, of the New York Yacht Club, who went as judges; Captain Thomas, who commanded the yacht; and a crew of twenty-two men. In the Vesta, were Messrs. George Lorillard and Taylor, the judges; Captain Dayton, and twenty-three petty officers and seamen. In the Henrietta, were Mr. Bennett, the owner; Messrs. Jerome, Knapp, and Fisk, judges and guests; Captain Samuels, formerly of the clipper ship Dreadnought; Sailing-Master Lyons; and a crew of twenty-four seamen, including petty officers, carpenter, sailmaker, and stewards.

At precisely one o'clock P.M., Mr. Fearing, the club starter, gave the signal for the race. Simultaneously the tugs were cast off, the sailors flew aloft, and the yachts were covered with canvas. The Fleetwing, having the most northerly position, and by far the best crew, easily gained an advantage at the start, and dashed away before the fresh breeze as if inspired to win. The Vesta followed almost as quickly; but the Henrietta, lying close in shore, had the worst of the start, and lagged behind despondingly. The tugs and excursion steamers sailed in a line after the yachts, bands and bells and cheers uniting in an encouraging clamour. As a striking contrast, the wreck of the Scotland lay abeam, sternly suggesting the dangers that were to be encountered on the voyage. Presently the bright sun was obscured by heavy clouds; the wind rapidly freshened; the good-byes shouted from the steamers were but faintly heard; the mournful strains of Auld Lang Syne sadly reminded the yachtsmen of the friends they were leaving. Then Sandy Hook, the extreme point of land, sunk out of sight; the Neversink Highlands faded into a cloud and soon disappeared; the last tie to home was dissolved; the open sea was before the voyagers; and three cheers from all the

yachts bade farewell to the United States. The yachts were at this time almost abreast, driven through the water by a ten-knot breeze. As the sun set in a glory of crimson and gold, each captain took the course he had previously selected. The Fleetwing kept to the northward; the Henrietta held straight on for the European steamer track; the Vesta dropped away to the southward, hoping to meet with weather more favourable to her peculiar construction. At six o'clock p.m. the yachtsmen on the Henrietta lost sight of the Fleetwing in the darkness. The Vesta was visible until eight o'clock, and then she, too, vanished in a moment. Now, for the first time, we felt the terrible loneliness of the sea. But the lights were bright in the cabin; a sumptuous dinner was served, and, what with songs and stories below, and a succession of heavy snow-squalls on deck, there was no chance to be melancholy. Fortunately, seasickness did not succeed home-sickness. The Henrietta rocked as gently as a cradle, and no person on board experienced a moment's illness at any period of the voyage.

The next day was very bright, but very cold. We were up betimes, and on the look-out for the other two yachts. Neither of them was ever in sight until we arrived at Cowes. We were not long in ignorance of the quality of the Henrietta's crew. One man after another was sent up to reef a signal-halyard, and one man after another slipped up and down the topmast, like a toy-monkey on a stick. In any case of emergency, we should have to rely upon Captain Samuels, sailing-master Lyons, and Jones and Coles, the first and second officers: who seemed to have as many lives and as much agility as a pair of cats, if one might judge from the manner in which they jumped and climbed about, eager to atone for the lubberliness of the rest of the crew. We carried all sail, and made eleven knots an hour until noon, when we were struck by a snow-squall, and had to take in topsails. The wind came in angry gusts from the north. At one o'clock, the end of our first nautical day, we found that the Henrietta had sailed two hundred and thirty-five knots by observation, and two hundred and thirty-seven by log. In the afternoon we showed our racing signal to two steamers, and received prompt replies. Several sailing vessels were in sight; but whenever we hoisted our dark blue flag they kept away from us. This was our constant experience throughout the race. Whether the captains of these ships took the Henrietta for a pirate, or a Fenian privateer—for in those days there were all kinds of mad tales about the Fenians—has not been satisfactorily explained; but we were never able to speak a vessel, although several were in our direct course, until we neared the coast of England. As night fell, the weather grew more stormy, and the mainsails were reefed. Every now and then, as the gale moderated, the reefs were shaken out, only to be taken in again when *the wind increased*. During this storm—and,

in fact, throughout the whole voyage—it was wonderful to observe the tact and patience with which Messrs. Lyons and Jones, who commanded the two watches into which the crew was divided, managed to get the utmost speed out of the yacht. At all hours the Henrietta carried all the canvas she could safely bear, but not a shred more. The sails were taken in and set, a score of times a day, as the weather varied. Not a moment was lost, not a rope strained, not an inch of canvas carried away. These incessant manœuvres singularly resembled those of a physician who administers stimulants to a patient with his hand upon the pulse, carefully noting every change. The Henrietta could not have had better doctors, and could not have done them greater credit.

And now, if the gentle reader be willing to trust himself upon a yacht in the Atlantic Ocean on a stormy night in the middle of December, he shall be invited on board the Henrietta, and shown over the vessel. The yacht is inclined at an angle of about forty-five degrees, and, as she has no bulwarks, the seas break over her, amidships. Having secured a firm and moderately dry position on deck, the gentle reader looks about him and sees, first of all, the man at the wheel, who is illuminated by the little lamp placed above the compass. Near this seaman, leaning over the rope that serves as a bulwark for the yacht, is Master Lyons, who commands the watch. The cabin doors are closed, to shut out the intruding sea. The deck is encumbered amidships, on the one side by spare spars, and on the other by the jolly-boat, which is more ornamental than useful, since no row-boat could swim when the Henrietta must sink. None of the crew is visible. One watch is asleep in the forecabin; the other is coiled up under tarpaulins forward. All sail is cracked on for the moment. Those queer oblong boxes, hauled half-way up the masts, contain canvas-back ducks—appropriate game for a yacht race—intended as presents for English friends, and especially for her Majesty the Queen. There is nothing else of interest to be seen on deck; neither Master Lyons nor the helmsman cares to talk, and outside the yacht the scriptural "blackness of darkness" rests upon the face of the waters. So we had better descend to the cabin, whence scraps of songs and shouts of laughter issue invitingly. Stay! Those port-holes attract attention. The Henrietta served as a revenue cutter during the late Civil War, and those port-holes were for her carronades. Her length? About equal to the frontage of three ordinary houses. Her breadth? Very nearly that of an ordinary room. The quarter-deck, so styled by courtesy, is about ten feet by six, and to that space, inclined at the angle aforesaid, almost all our exercise is confined. It is hardly as large as a barn-door.

In the cabin behold five persons, known on board as, respectively, the chief, the captain, the lieutenant, the joker, and the journalist. The chief is, of course, the owner of the yacht. The captain is Captain Samuels, who com-

mands the Henrietta. He ran away from school; went to sea as a common sailor; turned out to be an uncommon sailor; worked his way up unaided, to the rank of captain; taught himself navigation and all other useful knowledge; lived a pure Christian amid the dissipations of the merchant service; made himself respected equally by his virtues and his fists; crossed the Atlantic on seven occasions in the quickest time on record for a sailing ship; encountered adventures which would have put Othello to the blush, in spite of the Moor's complexion, and, above all, retained, developed, or acquired, the manners and motives of a thorough gentleman. The lieutenant is a little, quiet fellow, brimfull of cool courage, never losing his presence of mind except when ladies are in sight. He owes his title to his service in the Henrietta during the war. You will probably have stumbled over the joker in descending the companion-way. It is his custom to sit on the stairs, wrapped in a waterproof coat, and endeavour to seduce one of his companions to sit beside him, in the hope that a wave may drench the unwary victim. In appearance and humour he is a combination of Sir John Falstaff, Artemus Ward, and Joseph Miller. He laughs at everybody, and everybody laughs at him. In rough weather, he wins the captain's heart by attentively perusing a pocket-bible. In pleasant weather, he makes the hours pass like seconds with his jokes, songs, and stories. In a word, no yacht race would be complete without him. The journalist is the very reverse of the joker, against whom he is often pitted in single combat for the amusement of the company. His weakness is an ambition to be doing something, when there is absolutely nothing to be done. He keeps the log; he volunteers to assist the captain in working out his observations; he scribbles songs and attempts to teach his comrades to sing them; he makes himself obnoxious by wishing for a tremendous storm so that he may have something to describe.

The cabin itself is the size of a small room—say, of the gentle reader's library. On the starboard side, is a divan, upon which two men may sleep comfortably. The joker sleeps there, having been turned out of his bed in the chief's state-room by a leaky seam. The journalist also sleeps there—though he has a berth in the state-room with the lieutenant—because he labours under the idea that he must be at hand whenever the captain stirs, in order to see what is happening. On the larboard side, are piles of spare sails, and upon these the captain sleeps, whenever the exigencies of the race permit him to close his eyes, which is but very seldom. It is a curious fact that, whenever anybody else invades the captain's couch, by day or night, the yacht jibes, and the result is an awful tumble. In the centre of the cabin is a table, with a rim to restrain refractory plates. Around this table, the company are gathered. They have just finished a supper of fried oysters and game. Before them are song-books, bottles of Château Margaux, and

boxes of fragrant Havannas. There are cards on board, but they are never used; books, but they are never read. Even the bottles are used moderately. The overwhelming excitement of the race supersedes all other forms of excitement. Cigars, however, are in constant demand. To the right and left, at the end of the cabin, are doors leading to the state-rooms already mentioned. Between them is a narrow passage connecting the cabin with the kitchen. If the gentle reader be not averse to a glass of grog on this cold December night, he has only to signify his wish, and, in response to shouts of Tom, Albert, or Edward, two stewards and one cabin-boy rush into view. Experience has taught them that whenever anybody wants anything, the rest of the company are sure to join in the demand, and hence this triple apparition, like the witches in Macbeth.

On the second nautical day we had sailed two hundred and ten miles by observation, and twenty miles more by log. Captain Samuels accounted for this discrepancy by a current that had drifted us to the south-west. The afternoon was clear and sunshiny; the night was bright with moonlight, obscured by occasional snow-squalls. The next day, the fourteenth of December, the weather was sultry and the sea comparatively smooth. All day long nothing was in sight except flocks of gulls and Mother Carey's chickens. At noon, we had made two hundred and four miles more. In the evening, the moon showered silver upon a sea as placid as the Thames. We were all aroused at midnight by a change in the weather. Repeated squalls of rain and hail, like the quick blows of an accomplished pugilist, struck the Henrietta, and knocked her through the heavy seas at the rate of eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen, knots an hour. This battering by Boreas continued until sunrise, when a snow-storm set in. The waves foamed upon the deck, as if showing their white teeth at the presumptuous little yacht. To leeward, a spar from some recent wreck lifted itself to view, like a warning finger. Scudding before the wind, the Henrietta fairly flew over the waves; but the silence, which no one felt disposed to break except by whispers, was most depressing. No observation could be taken, as the sun was totally obscured, but the dead reckoning—suggestive phrase!—assured us that we had sailed two hundred and twenty-five miles during the past twenty-four hours. There was some comfort in this. Even the storm was helping us to victory.

As night—which was but a darker day—closed in upon us, the Henrietta sailed faster and faster. This was a habit of the little yacht. Often at sunset we used to pat her as if she had been a living thing, and cry, encouragingly, "Now, Henrietta! This is your time, dearie!" Perhaps the dew wetted the sails, and thus ensured our superior speed after nightfall. But on this especial evening the little boat shuddered as she went, like a racehorse overdriven. The pumps were tested every hour; but though they sounded like a

knell, they showed no leakage. Sea after sea boarded the yacht, but did no damage. Not even a spare spar was moved. Running freely before the wind, the *Henrietta* never pitched nor tossed, and, full of confidence in her strength and buoyancy, all hands slept as soundly as if the yacht had been the *Great Eastern*. In the grey of the following morning we were crossing the Grand Banks of Newfoundland. Through the thick mist, we saw a heavily-laden brig bearing down upon us. We were sailing at tremendous speed, and cut boldly across her course. Her crew, startled by an apparition which must have seemed to them like the Flying Dutchman, manned the rigging to stare at us; but we dashed swiftly by in silence, and as swiftly disappeared. At noon, we reckoned that we had made two hundred and fifty-six miles during the last nautical day, and had accomplished one-third of the distance to Cowes. The wind had been west by north, and north by west, since our start, and the yacht had kept her course without perceptible variation. The captain reminded us that this day, the sixteenth of December, was the Sabbath, and at two o'clock the yachtsmen and the officers assembled in the cabin for divine service. The prayers for the day, a chapter from the Bible, and one of Jay's brief sermons were read in turn; but this simple ceremony acquired a remarkable solemnity from the circumstances by which we were surrounded. The swash of the seas that swept over the vessel often drowned the voice of the reader. During the service, one of the crew was carried overboard, and all rushed on deck to rescue him. The passage, "Surely in the midst of life we are in death" seemed to us transposed; for surely in the midst of death we were in life!

Again the night came, and we had cleared the Grand Banks and were off soundings. The sea still hammered away at the yacht, as if Neptune had surrendered his trident to Vulcan; but the wind held from the northward, and the gallant *Henrietta* registered her eleven and twelve knots an hour. The next morning we were in the "roaring forties"—degrees of longitude which the captain had taught us to dread. The character of the waves entirely altered. Instead of dancing over short chopping seas, like those of the English Channel, we passed between ranges of water-hills. Sailing in the trough of the sea, the sensation was precisely similar to that which is experienced in passing through a railway cutting, except that our banks were movable. As they rose and fell they disclosed mirages in the dim distance. Ships under full sail, ocean islands, even momentary towns and cities, were pictured upon the waves, the views changing like those of a kaleidoscope. The water was glazed by the snow, and appeared to be of the consistency of oil. There was no horizon. The sky was veiled with leaden clouds. Nevertheless, we were in excellent spirits, for the barometer promised us fair weather; the wind, which had been wavering for some hours, again blew from

the north; and our reckoning showed that the yacht had gained two hundred and eighty miles during the past day. Thus in six days and fourteen hours we had sailed half across the Atlantic. In the afternoon a magnificent rainbow decorated the sky and endorsed the promises of the barometer. Amid the general jubilation, the captain alone was morose. He declared that we had been too fortunate, and that our luck was too good to last. The barometer was wrong; the rainbow was wrong; Captain Samuels, as usual, was right. During the night the wind shifted to west-south-west, and we were compelled to jibe ship, throwing all the sleepers out of their berths remorselessly. Rain and hail-squalls followed each other in rapid succession. Signs of dirty weather ominously increased. For the first time, the mainsail was double-reefed. At noon we had sailed two hundred and fifty miles; but with the dreaded south-west wind to baffle us we had no hope of such splendid progress in the future. Clearly, we should have to face an adverse gale. The journalist was about to have his wishes realised; but the rest of the company regarded him as a Jonah, and glared at him as wrathfully as if he had been personally responsible for the storm.

At four o'clock P.M. the gale had set in with all its fury. The mainsail was furled, the jibs were taken in, and the foresail was treble reefed. Under this small spread of canvas, the yacht was driven at the rate of nine knots an hour. The rain and spray now dropped around the vessel like a watery curtain, as if the sea would conceal from us the terrors it was preparing. The *Henrietta*, tormented by the wind and waves, lost all patience, and pitched and tossed about like a thing possessed of evil spirits. The yacht was put in order for the worst. A bucket was placed near the cabin stove, to extinguish the fire if necessary. The dead-lights leaked. Water came dripping in through seams hitherto seaworthy. Needless to say, it was impossible to sleep. The servants, attempting to comply with innumerable orders, were flung about the cabin, as if discharged from catapults. The seamen moved about dejectedly, as though some great peril were impending. The ready cry, "If you're not satisfied, take your carpet-bag and go ashore," that had hitherto prevented all grumbling, no longer preserved good humour among the yachtsmen. At last the order, "Lie down and take it easy," sent the company to their couches, and transformed them into marine Mark Tapleys. It was so pleasant to lie there and watch the men boring holes in the floor to let out the water in case the waves broke through the skylight! Suppose the waves did break through the skylight—what then? As if in answer, there came a frightful crash on deck. A tremendous sea had burst over the quarter, struck full upon the foresail, and glanced off upon the jolly-boat, staving in the boat's side like a blow from a sledge-hammer. If that sea had struck the deck first, the *Henrietta* must have foundered with all on board. Simultaneously, the carpenter

threw himself into the cabin, crying: "Mr. Bennett, we must heave her to! She is opening forward, sir! For God's sake, heave her to!" In an instant Captain Samuels was below, examining the supposed leak. The yacht had been lengthened; the joining had not been properly spliced; the sea had found out this vulnerable heel of Achilles, and was working hard to tear it open. Mr. Bennett calmly informed his friends of the extent of the danger. Everybody lighted a fresh cigar, and left the affair in the hands of the captain. The captain began by informing the carpenter, for the benefit of the crew, that the apparent leakage was caused by the oozing of the bilge-water. Then he decided that the yacht could be driven no longer, even though the race were lost. Next, he gave orders to heave to. This nautical manoeuvre consists in laying the ship with her head to the wind, under close canvas, so that she rides as if at anchor. As the sailors came into the cabin and carried the storm-trysails on deck, it was as if they had brought forth a pall. To stop in the midst of a race seemed equivalent to losing it. This was the burial of all our hopes!

Thus the *Henrietta* was hove to in the roaring forties, rocking lazily upon the sea, the wind howling by, and the waves dashing past her, but neither disturbing her well-earned repose at this halfway house in the middle of the Atlantic. It turned out afterwards that we had been caught in a cyclone, from which large steamers suffered severely. During this dreadful night, the *Fleetwing*, further to the northward, had six men washed overboard and was nearly lost. The *Vesta*, sailing to the southward, escaped all but the fringes of the storm. But the captain assured us that, though we had lost time, we had not been driven from our course, and that, during his thirty years' experience, he had never seen any other vessel that could have weathered such a gale so long. By noon the next day, the wind had moderated, and we were again under way. Up to this time, in accordance with an old superstition of seamen, we had not been allowed to change our clothes since leaving New York. The wind had been favourable, and the captain was resolved that no fancy for a new necktie or another coat should alter it. You might take off your clothing as often as you pleased, so long as you put the same things on again; but to change a single garment would be fatal. Indeed, it is a disputed point whether all our troubles in the roaring forties, were not attributable to the joker, who would persist in borrowing other people's clothes. However, on the morning after the gale, the wind still holding from the south while the captain desired it to blow from the northward, permission was given to vary our attire. One of the stewards was discovered to be a professional barber, and everybody made an elaborate toilet. For a wonder, the old superstition proved true; the wind shifted to north-by-west, and at three p.m. we were going at the rate of fifteen miles an hour. During the storm of the day before,

we had run our shortest distance—one hundred and fifty-three miles. Now, with a favouring wind, we scored two hundred and sixty miles in the same time. The day was very pleasant, with bright sunshine and a cloudless sky; but the waves still ran mountain high, as if feeling the farewell impetus of the gale. At night, the mellow moonlight marked our course before us, and the *Henrietta* danced gaily along between walls of water. The weather was so warm that the cabin fire was allowed to die out, and overcoats were discarded.

The next day was even warmer, and passed without incident, the yacht making eleven knots an hour, and the clouds prognosticating a continuance of the fair wind. But, on the day following this, summer itself seemed to have come upon us. There was a dead calm, and the heat was oppressive. The clouds of the previous day had been as deceitful as the barometer and the rainbow already mentioned. The *Henrietta* simply drifted through the water, her sails flapping idly against the masts. The ocean was as smooth as a millpond, and no ripple of the waves, no creaking of the cordage, broke the profound silence. Another superstitious change of toilet was suggested, and again the charm proved effectual. By noon we were making eleven knots an hour. The next day was the twenty-second of December. The yacht was gliding along, at the rate of two hundred and fifty miles per day. In the midst of a Scotch mist we spoke the packet-ship *Philadelphia*, eleven days out from Liverpool. We were also eleven days out—from New York. The captain of the *Philadelphia* hoisted the American colours in our honour, and further endeared himself to us by two items of good news, to wit: that he had heard nothing of the other yachts, and that the winds were westerly. This was the only vessel spoken by the *Henrietta* during the voyage. From this moment, the excitement in regard to the result of the race, which had been dulled by the greater excitements of the sea, again seized upon us. Divine service was performed on Sunday, but was constantly interrupted by false reports of sails in sight.

Every night the *Henrietta* seemed to sail more swiftly. Nothing was talked about but the other yachts and the probable fate of our rivals. Nobody could spare an hour for sleep. The light green water and the sullen sky perpetually reminded us how close we were to England. At three p.m. the captain informed us that we were on soundings; at midnight we were off Cape Clear; early next morning we were in the chops of the Channel. The goal was close at hand. Had we won the race? The carpenter, who had treated us to one sensation by his discovery that the yacht had parted forwards, now indulged us with another, by suddenly discovering the *Fleetwing* to larboard. The scramble for binocular glasses, telescopes, spectacles—anything to see through—was most ludicrous; and, after all, the imaginary yacht revealed herself as an English

topsail schooner, bound in the other direction. But it was Christmas-eve, and we were almost in the land of Christmas. A full table was spread, and a venerable figure of Father Christmas, carefully concealed since we left New York, was produced by the chief. There was high wassail, but there was also much anxiety at heart. While the festivities were in progress, we were called on deck to see the Scilly Island lights. This marvellous landfall won us the race. Captain Samuels had brought the *Henrietta* from Sandy Hook to the Scilly Islands, without making a single tack, and having varied only eleven miles from the straightest possible route between the two places. Seamanship had conquered speed, and the slowest yacht was to be the first to pass the winning-post. On Christmas Day, under every stitch of canvas, with even her stay-sail set, and with her colours floating lightly in the breeze, the *Henrietta* flashed by the Needles, and the judges on board decided that the conditions of the race had been rigidly observed. Down went our racing flag. As it fell, the yacht turned into the Cowes Channel, the hills shut out the wind, and, like a racer who drops into a walk when the contest is over, the *Henrietta* slackened her speed and floated leisurely along. The people waved her a welcome from the hill-tops, and Hurst Castle dipped its flag as a salute. Nobody had expected her so soon. When, in the dusk of evening, her blue lights and rockets announced her arrival off Cowes, the town was taken by surprise. In thirteen days twenty-two hours and forty-six minutes, she had crossed the Atlantic. Commodore M'Vickar, who was to come over in a steamer to decide the race, had not yet arrived. Only one member of the Royal Yacht Squadron was at Cowes to do the honours of the club-house. The cry of all visitors was: "You are before your time!" Nevertheless, an English welcome was not lacking, and before midnight all hands were at home in Cowes. An hour or two later the *Fleetwing* and the *Vesta* dropped into harbour in the darkness, beaten but not disgraced. The *Fleetwing* brought the dreadful story of the loss of six brave men. The *Vesta* had not shipped a sea, and claimed to have been carried out of her course by an incompetent channel pilot. But the charts of the race reveal the real secret. While the *Henrietta* had been steering a straight course, the other two yachts had been zig-zagging to the northward and southward. The *Henrietta* had taken the shortest line; they had chosen the longest. Then another triumph awaited the little yacht. By direction of the Admiralty, Captain Luard, of Her Britannic Majesty's ironclad *Hector*, sent a midshipman on board to offer Mr. Bennett the facilities of the royal dockyard for repairs; but nothing was out of order, no repairs were necessary; and the generous offer was gratefully declined. To have made such a voyage without the loss of a spar, a shred of canvas, or a bit of rope, was almost a modern miracle.

But, strangely enough, the victory of the *Henrietta* distracted attention from the very

point which the Ocean Yacht Race of 1866 was originally designed to settle. Had the *Vesta* won, yachtsmen on both sides the Atlantic would have been immersed in the mysteries of centre-board yachts, and we might have had another revolution similar to that caused by the triumph of the *America*. The *Vesta* did not win; but she crossed the Atlantic with perfect safety, rode out severe gales easily, and sailed into Cowes only a few hours behind the winner, though she was less skilfully navigated. That the *Vesta* was much faster than either of her rivals on smooth water, seems to have been conceded, and we have seen that she held her own with them upon the ocean. The problem in regard to centre-board boats which her record presents, has been shirked by the opponents of that style of yacht-building; but its advocates claim for it greater speed, increased solidity in rough water, and unequalled buoyancy in all waters. It is remarkable that, in a race arranged to test these very claims, the performances of the *Vesta* should be ignored as though they had decided nothing. The *Vesta* and the *Fleetwing* still belong to the New York Yacht Club, and will doubtless have to be encountered by those English yachtsmen who, sooner or later, will emulate the example of the Americans and cross the ocean to regain the trophy won by the *America* and now held as a challenge cup for foreign yachts. The *Henrietta*, having been offered as a New Year's gift to Prince Alfred, who was not at liberty to accept so valuable a present, has since been sold by her owner for fifty thousand dollars. Her victory, though it neither confirmed nor upset any theories as to models, has yet led indirectly to important results. The hospitalities extended to her owner and his friends by English yachtsmen have encouraged other American yachtsmen to visit England, and opened the way to the recent contest between the Harvard and Oxford crews. Such international contests and courtesies benefit both countries. Two American yachts, the *Sappho* and the *Dauntless*, are now in English waters and have contended, as yet not very successfully, with English yachts. As it is no farther from England to America, than from America to England, and as the hospitalities of both countries are equally generous, we hope that in another year these yachting visits will be returned. And, like the Americans, we wish, in advance, the best of good fortune "to the yachtsman who goes in his own boat."

A CONFESSION AND APOLOGY.

'Tis time that I should loose from life at last
This heart's unworthy longing for the past,
Ere life be turned to loathing.
For love, at least this love of one for one,
Is, at the best, not all beneath the sun,
And at the worst, 'tis nothing.

Not that, of all the past, I would forget
One pleasure or one pain. I cherish yet,
And would dishonour never,
All I have felt. But, cherish'd tho' it be,
'Tis time my past should set my future free,
For life's renew'd endeavour.

Not much I reverence that remorse which flies
To desert caves, and bids its dupes despise
Themselves on whom it preys;
Wasting the worth of life on worthless pain,
To make the future, as the past was, vain,
By endless self-dispraise.

As tho', forsooth, because a man is not
His self-made god, he needs must curse his lot
With self-contempt! as tho'
Some squalid maniac, that with life-long moan
Insults man's flesh and blood, with these hath done
The best that man can do!

Nor am I keen to urge that common claim
On this world or another—here, for fame,
Which only grows on graves—
Or there for so much, purchaseable here
By earth's joy stinted, of celestial cheer;
The stimulant of slaves.

Not for reward, not for release from pain,
But with a man's imperative disdain
Of all that wastes man's nature,
Rise, O my soul, and reach to loftier things,
Untrammell'd by this florid weed that clings,
Stunting a spirit's stature!

I was not born to sit with shrouded head,
Piping shrill ditties to the unburied dead,
While life's arm'd host sweeps by.
I hear the clarion call, the war-steed neigh,
The banner fluttering in the wind's free play,
The brave man's battle cry.

And I am conscious that, where all things strive,
'Tis shameful to sit still. I would not live
Content with a life lost
In chasing mine own fancies thro' void air,
Or decking forth in forms and phrases fair
The miserable ghost

Of personal joy or pain. The ages roll
Forward; and, forward with them, draw my soul
Into time's infinite sea.
And to be glad, or sad, I care no more;
But to have done, and to have been, before
I cease to do and be.

From the minutest struggle to excel,
Of things whose momentary myriads dwell
In drops of dew confined,
To spirits standing on life's upmost stair,
Whose utterances alter worlds, and are
The makers of mankind,

All things cry shame on lips that squander speech
In words which, if not deeds, are worthless each.
Not here are such words wanted,
Where all bestirs itself, where dumb things do,
By nobly silent action, speak, and go
Forth to their fates undaunted.

Shame on the wretch who, born a man, forgoes
Man's troublous birthright for a brute's repose!
Shame on the eyes that see
This mighty universe, yet see not there
Something of difficult worth a man may dare
Bravely to do and be!

Yet is there nought for shame in anything
Once dear and beautiful. The shrivell'd wing,
Scathed by what seem'd a star,
And proved, alas! no star, but withering fire,
Is worthier than the wingless worm's desire
For nothing fair or far.

Rather the ground that's deep enough for graves,
Rather the stream that's strong enough for waves,
Than the loose sandy drift
Whose shifting surface cherishes no seed
Either of any flower or any weed,
Which ever way it shift,

Or stagnant shallow which the storms despise,
Nought finding there to prey upon, I prize.

Why should man's spirit shrink
From feeling to the utmost—be it pain
Or pleasure—all 'twas form'd, nor form'd in vain,
To feel with force? I think

That never to have aim'd and miss'd is not
To have achieved. I hold the loftier lot
To enoble, not escape,
Life's sorrows and love's pangs. I count a man,
Tho' sick to death, for something nobler than
A healthy dog or ape.

I deem that nothing suffer'd or enjoy'd
By a man's soul deserves to be destroy'd;
But rather to be made
Means of a soul's increased capacity
Either to suffer, and to gain thereby
A more exalted grade

Among the spirits purified by pain;
Or to enjoy, and thereby to attain
That lovelier influence
Reserved for spirits that, 'mid the general moan
Of human griefs, praise God with clearest tone
Of joyous trust intense.

And for this reason, I would yet keep fair
And fresh the memory of all things that were
Sweet in their place and season:
And I forgive my life its failures too,
Since failures old, to guide endeavours new,
I prize for the same reason.

MR. CHAFFINCH TO MR. CHILDERS.

MR. CHAFFINCH—the present writer—wonders how the scions of the penultimate generation, solemn little prigs! addressed their parents, solemn old prigs! when they wanted to be taken out for a holiday? Most probably they dared not ask for such a favour at all; but if by any chance they had managed to screw their courage to the sticking-place, they would have said: "Honoured sir, our studies having been pursued with diligence and zeal, we would regard it as a high token of our parent's inestimable approbation, if he would considerately consent to let us enjoy a little relaxation, and would add to the zest of that relaxation by sharing it with us." When the eldest of Mr. Chaffinch's two boys said to him this morning, "I say, pup"—a fond abbreviation for papa—"take us somewhere to-day," and Mr. Chaffinch replied, "All right; where shall it be?" Mr. C. thought that the tone of our social relations had on the whole improved. Where *should* it be? The party had "done" the Polytechnic and the Zoological Gardens, had ridden donkeys on Hampstead Heath, and swam boats in the Highgate ponds; had elaborated a plan for spending a happy day at Rosherville; and, so far as Mr. Chaffinch could see, had thus drained Pleasure's goblet to the dregs. Mr. Chaffinch was compelled to allow that his brain was barren of sug-

gestion, when his youngest hope inquired, innocently, "I say, pup, what's Greenwich?" Hail, required clue! Mr. C. forebore to mention that Greenwich was the home of whitebait; for, in the first place, the season was over; and in the second place, the introduction to the mysteries is costly and not sufficiently appreciable—at the price—by small birds under fourteen years of age. But Mr. Chaffinch dilated with such eloquence on the glories of the hospital, the pensioners, and the park, pictured so skilfully the delights of the passage down the river, climaxed so admirably with a hint at a meat-tea to be procured from a hospitable relative resident in the neighbourhood—that the boys shouted for Greenwich with one voice, and the parental Chaffinch saw his way to giving them a successful treat at a moderate expense.

Mr. Chaffinch found himself, during the voyage down, fearfully and wonderfully like Mr. Barlow as he pointed out (to Sandford and Merton) the Monument, the Custom House, the Tower, Execution Dock, and other riverside objects of interest, and answered, as he best might, the questions with which S. and M. plied him. Chaffinch and party landed at Greenwich, and passed the Ship, where one melancholy waiter was yawning at the upper windows, and where a man was dining off hot boiled beef—fancy hot boiled beef at Greenwich!—in the coffee-room. They noticed the lump of red granite, which, erected as a memorial of Lieutenant Bellot, does greater credit to British gratitude than to British taste; they inspected the Hospital, the Painted Hall with its pictures of sea-fights and its wonderful portraits of wonderful admirals; they peered in at the glass case containing Nelson's coat and waistcoat; and they went away happy. Then they adjourned to the Park, and did the pensioners: who returned the compliment by doing them (out of a shilling) for looking through their telescopes, and who greatly gratified Mr. Chaffinch's youngest hope by showing him the exact spot on which the parental mansion, Number Four, Adalbert Villas, Dagmar-road, Canonbury, N., was situated. After declining to run more than once up and down One Tree Hill, holding a hand of each of the boys—an athletic proceeding for which his figure is scarcely suitable—and after failing to catch and receiving many stinging cuts from a ball which the boys had brought with them—Mr. Chaffinch began to be rather bored by the boys. You see they had been more

than three weeks at home, and the small family circle had exhausted most of the topics of conversation possessing common interest, and Mr. Chaffinch was beginning to feel that he had not done proper justice to that priggish era, when, under similar circumstances, he could have bade his offspring, in sonorous sentences, to retire and leave him to his own meditations; when the triumvirate fortunately came across three young gentlemen (sons of the meat-tea relative before alluded to), in whose company the youthful Chaffinches most willingly remained.

The meat-tea relative though hospitable is not amusing, and Mr. Chaffinch thought he should be better by himself, but was very much put to it for something to do during two hours. The town of Greenwich one would think the nastiest in the world unless one had seen Deptford, its neighbour; it occurs to its streets to be perpetually under repair, and it has a floating population of 'longshore loafers, river scum, and navvies. Mr. Chaffinch made his way down to the pier, looked at the boats coming and going, had half a mind to walk into the Ship and see what kind of monstrous fish they would offer him as whitebait, had an idea of crossing by the ferry-steamer and penetrating into the Isle of Dogs, when suddenly, looking up stream, he caught sight of the Dreadnought, the hospital ship for sailors, belonging to the Seamen's Hospital Society, which he had often heard of but had never seen. This decided him; he hailed a boat, and five minutes afterwards stepped on the deck of the Dreadnought.

A big line-of-battle ship, formerly the Caledonia, and carrying one hundred and twenty guns, but now named the Dreadnought, after her immediate predecessor (the first floating hospital-ship was called the Grampus, was a small fifty-gun craft, and was moored off Greenwich in 1821), with her ports open, but filled, instead of with grim, black gun-muzzles, with the pale faces and light-capped heads of convalescent patients. The upper deck, white and bare, and with the exception of a jury-mast quite devoid of rigging. Mr. Chaffinch waited there looking round him while some one fetched the resident medical officer: a courteous gentleman, under whose guidance he made the tour of the ship, and from whom he received all necessary information.

Mr. Chaffinch and his guide first descended to the main-deck, where are, the chapel, elaborately fitted up with carved

wood; the snug quarters of the medical staff: for the establishment on board the Dreadnought is precisely on the footing of other hospitals, with a superintendent, surgeons, assistant-surgeon, visiting physicians, apothecary, chaplain, &c.; and an open space where the convalescent patients sleep at night in hammocks. Down the hatchway to the middle, or deck devoted to surgical cases, the lower being given up to medical cases, and the orlop to special complaints. The orlop opens flush with the ordinary height of a boat, and there is an apparatus by which a patient thus brought alongside can be lifted to the deck, and even to the bed where he is to be treated. Sick seamen of every nation, on presenting themselves alongside, are immediately received, without any commendatory letter, their own condition being sufficient to insure their admission. This facility of admission is in itself productive of great benefit, as the cases are immediately attended to, and the patients are effectually relieved in a much shorter period than would otherwise be practicable. The only testimony required from the sailor seeking admission, that he is what he represents himself to be, is his letter of discharge from his last ship.

The average number of inmates is from one hundred and seventy to one hundred and eighty. The number of patients admitted last year was of in-patients two thousand one hundred and thirty-five, and of out-patients one thousand and fifty. Since the establishment of the hospital, forty-eight years ago, upwards of one hundred thousand seafaring men have received its benefits. Of these, between seventy-two and seventy-three thousand were British; then next in number, as in behaviour and gratitude, are the Swedes and Norwegians, the East and West Indians, and Yankees. There are as many Africans as French, Russians, and Spaniards, twice as many South Sea Islanders as Greeks, nineteen Turks, fifty-three New Zealanders—who had got over, it is to be hoped, their cannibalistic tendencies—fifty-five Chinese, and nearly two hundred persons “born at sea,” and, therefore, supposed to be accreditable to the parish of Stepney. There is not much trouble in keeping order and discipline. The patients are, as a rule, very well behaved; occasionally the Irish or American fighting element crops out, but it is easily reducible. A patient can leave, at any time he likes, but, if he leave before the medical officers consider him in a proper state for removal, it is entered

against him that he insisted upon going, “contrary to advice.” There is, however, no necessity for patients to quit the ship immediately upon their cure; they can stop on board as convalescents, assisting in the work that must be done, and receiving diet-rations accordingly. The number of deaths is about a hundred and twenty a year. The Dreadnought Hospital is the only hospital in the kingdom which has to pay for the burial of its inmates. The dead from the Dreadnought, whose “heavy-shotted hammock shroud” one somehow absurdly fancies would be hurled overboard into the Thames, are pauper-coffined and buried after the usual fashion in the cemetery of Shooter’s Hill.

The decks are, indeed, larger than the wards of any civil hospital in England, but are not too well adapted for their requirements in several ways. For instance, in the matter of ventilation: the sole channel for air is the port; when it is open the draught is excessive, and the occupant of a bed in its immediate neighbourhood has the chance of suffering from that absolute necessity, the admission of fresh air. The size of the wards is also a drawback. In the medical ward, for instance, there are sixty-three beds, and one noisy fellow suffering from delirium-tremens, or some such ailment, will keep all the other patients awake, and thus do some of them unspeakable harm. Moreover, in wards of such size, the distance to be traversed by the nurses is unquestionably too great. The nursing staff seemed capable of improvement and increase. At present, there are six male and six female nurses:—clearly an insufficient number, as in the medical ward there are only three nurses, or one to every twenty-one patients. A male nurse is scarcely a satisfactory person, however well-intentioned he may be. Where pain and sickness wring the brow, it is woman who is, or should be, the ministering angel; but there is a difficulty in obtaining the services of the best class of nurses, the “sisters” who are attached to many of the metropolitan hospitals, on account of the want of proper accommodation for them on board.

The patients were very quiet; some were asleep—the happiest, perhaps; some were reading newspapers; here and there was a couple playing draughts; some were lying, looking straight before them, with that look so frequently seen in illness, that clear sad look which rests nowhere—nowhere, at least, within human ken. Above each bed was the usual little board, inscribed with the

patient's name, his diet-table, and other particulars of his case. Each man on admittance has his money and effects taken care of by the boatswain, and is supplied with the society's clothes: his own being taken from him for the nonce, as a very necessary precaution in many cases against vermin. At the end of the medical deck, is the dispensary, and beyond that again the operating-room: a poor place enough, having no skylight, and being altogether behind the requirements of modern civilisation. After his visit to the patients, Mr. Chaffinch ascended to the upper deck, and was taken to see the galley, and then strolled aft, and, without violating their sanctity, looked at the quarters of the commander in the poop. For this Dreadnought, though lent to the Seamen's Hospital Society for benevolent purposes, is still on the Admiralty books, and consequently is under the command of an officer of the Royal Navy, who takes care that she is not "cut out" by the pirates of Bugsby's Reach, or boarded by the corsairs of Deptford Creek.

The revenues of the hospital, originating in a fund subscribed in the winter of 1817-1818 for the temporary relief of distressed seamen (who were at that time to be found in great numbers in the streets of the metropolis), may be considered to have been rendered permanently available by the munificence of Mr. John Lydekker, who, in 1832, left to them stock worth nearly fifty thousand pounds. In addition to this, collections are constantly made on board ships belonging to the Royal Navy, and the mercantile marine; and subscriptions are received through official channels from all civilised nations, with the exception of the United States. The American Consul, it is true, takes a lively interest in the institution, and has been the means of obtaining for it many good subscriptions from his wealthy countrymen resident in England; but this is privately and on his own account. Applied to officially, he quotes the Act of Congress as forbidding him to take any cognizance of the institution. While on the subject of revenue, one is inclined to ask why the anniversary dinners, which seem to have been always largely profitable, have been given up since 1862.

An institution like this, which, in the course of forty-eight years, has been of incalculable service and benefit to upwards of one hundred thousand seamen, is clearly entitled to a considerable amount both of public and private support. As regards private support, the published lists of subscriptions show that Jack "hove down in the

bay of sickness," as the nautical dramatist puts it, is not forgotten by the gentlemen of England who live at home at ease; and it is to be hoped that this account of the hospital thus simply set forth may have some effect towards increasing the annual income. With regard to public support, it is desirable to point out that the government has now, or will have shortly, an opportunity of doing a graceful and liberal act which would be singularly efficacious and thoroughly appreciated. Under the new Order in Council, which—by no means too soon—reorganises and rehabilitates the splendid charity of Greenwich Hospital, the building known as the "Infirmary" will become vacant. Let this building be handed over to the Seamen's Hospital Society for their inmates. Standing isolated, as it does, there can be no pretence that such a disposition of it would interfere with the pensioners, the officers, or anybody concerned: while it would enable the officials of the society to remedy a great many shortcomings necessarily inseparable from this excellent institution while afloat. Mr. Chaffinch has the boldness to hope that he here offers MR. CHILDERS, to whom all credit is due for the skill and boldness with which he has encountered and slain the twin dragons of Circumlocution and Lavish Expenditure, guarding his department, a wrinkle which shall suit his notions of proper economy. The porous and spongy old Dreadnought costs every year a sum of some three hundred pounds for caulking; when once her inmates are happily housed in the infirmary, this item will be wiped off the estimates.

With this great notion sprouting in his mind, Mr. Chaffinch bade adieu to his courteous conductor, was pulled ashore, walked through the streets of Greenwich, and, arriving at the house of the meat-*tea* relative, found his boys steeped to the ears in strawberry jam. He penned the present article under those succulent circumstances, and presents it, with his respectful homage, to Mr. Childers.

WHERE DO SOME THINGS COME FROM?

It is not difficult to understand that things made of wood and stone and metal, of which the supply is virtually unlimited, as well as fabrics of cotton, muslin, gauze, and wool, should be turned out as fast as they are wanted. It is comprehensible, too, that such developments of silk and satin and velvet as may hit the humour of the moment should be forthcoming, in a degree commensurate with the re-

quirements of the public: though this is less easy to understand when one reflects that the whole supply is due to the exertions of a finite number of small caterpillars. The multiplication of objects, the material for constructing which is practically unlimited, is tolerably comprehensible; but what seems unaccountable is the extraordinary way in which certain products of nature—animal, vegetable, and mineral—seem to rush into existence on the shortest notice, whenever a demand for them springs up.

How wonderfully accommodating—to take an instance—has Nature proved of late years in connexion with the increased prolificness of the Seal Tribe, or at any rate that portion of it which furnishes the material that goes by the name of seal-skin! It is only within the last dozen years or so, that this particular kind of fur has become furiously popular. It is marvellous to observe how strangely, within that comparatively short time, the supply has increased and multiplied also. A few years ago, a seal-skin cloak was an uncommon garment, a rarity: whereas, now, during the whole of the autumn and winter seasons, we are so surrounded by all sorts of seal-skin garments—cloaks, jackets, waistcoats, hats, caps, muffs, tippets, and the like: not to speak of cigar-cases, purses, tobacco-pouches, blotting-books, and other miscellaneous objects—that we might suppose seal-skin to be not merely, as Jaques said of Motley, "Your only wear," but your only decorative fabric available for any purpose whatsoever. For, look where one may, it is still seal-skin, seal-skin, seal-skin, everywhere. On the shoulders of ladies; on the breasts of the lords of creation; in the shop-windows; in the circulars which are thrust into our letter-boxes, announcing a consignment of ever so many thousand seal-skin jackets; in the advertisement sheets of the newspapers, from the Times Supplement to the columns of the Exchange and Mart—in which last journal the yearnings of humanity after seal-skin, and its readiness to barter all other property, of whatsoever kind, in exchange for this idolised fur, are more touchingly expressed than in any other—under each and all of these aspects the seal-skin rage is continually kept before us.

But the supply with which this phocal rage is appeased, is the marvellous thing. How is it that such supply has suddenly come into existence? Or, was it always there, though there was no demand? Has the genus phoca been wearing seal-skin jackets ever since the creation, retaining unmolested their possession of those priceless wares through countless ages; or has this obliging tribe of animals increased in numbers of late years, out of readiness to gratify the caprice of the fashionable world?

Then there are the kids again—what shall we say of the kids? If it be matter of wonder where all the seals come from, how much more wonderful, how stupefying and stunning, is the thought of the myriads of young goats, whose existence is absolutely necessary to furnish the gloves of the whole civilised world? Kids! How is it that there exist six yards of ground anywhere, without kids browsing thereon? One

would expect that the earth would be teeming and swarming with kids. In every town in England, in France, in Europe, gloves made of what at least professes to be the skin of the kid, are exposed for sale; while in the large capitals the number of shops devoted exclusively to the diffusion of kid gloves is almost incredible. Taking Paris and London alone, and occupying ourselves only with a few of the principal thoroughfares, we should find enough of such shops to suggest the existence somewhere of such flocks of kids as would overrun at least all the pasture lands of the civilised earth. How many such shops are there in the Palais Royal, the Boulevards, the Rue de Rivoli, the Rue de la Paix; how many in Regent-street, Oxford-street, Bond-street, the Strand, Cheapside, and Piccadilly? How many in other great capitals? How many in South America, how many in Australia, how many in New Zealand? If we take the trouble to enter on the field of conjecture which is thus opened out before us, we shall be cast out in imagination on immeasurable unknown Prairies where the foot of man has never trod (except to capture kids), and where skipping kids disport themselves in such prodigious numbers, that the American herd of buffaloes who took six weeks to pass a man in a ditch at full gallop, would be as an every-day drove in the comparison.

I speak of the supply of the raw material, and not the enormous multiplication and sale of the gloves themselves. When one remembers how many are the occasions of show and ceremony where gloves of the palest and most delicate tints are alone admissible, and how soon (covering as they do a part of the human frame which comes in continual contact with all sorts of objects) they become soiled and unfit for use, there is no difficulty in understanding the sale of almost any number of gloves that can be manufactured. It is the multiplication of the kids of whose skins the gloves are made, that is the staggering subject of reflection, and it is in connexion with this, and remembering how comparatively rare, even in France, Italy, and Switzerland, and other goat-producing countries, are the occasions when the traveller encounters kids in any number, that I find myself again and again constrained to ask, O where, and O where are your glove-producing kids?

Is it not a fact that there are more fair-haired children to be seen in this country than there used to be? Any one who can find leisure in the early part of the day, to visit those portions of our parks and public gardens where children most resort, will infallibly be struck by the great increase in the number of children whose hair is to be classed as belonging to the group of colours which we call "light." Now, we know that fair hair has lately been very much the rage, and we also know that various inventions have been published for taking the natural darkness out of the hair, and imparting to it a flaxen or a golden shade. The use of such medicaments has, however, always been confined to grown-up people, and in none of the recorded instances of that tampering with the natural colour of the

hair which has been common of late years, have children had any part; so their adaptation to the fashion of the time in this respect would seem to be purely attributable to an obligingness on the part of Dame Nature similar to the politeness of the seals and the philanthropy of the kids.

There was a taste the other day for pug-dogs. Fashion had no sooner issued her mandate on the subject, than behold in all directions there were pugs! The earth appeared to teem with short noses and black muzzles; and any one who wanted a pug (and chose to pay for it) was straightway provided with one of those fascinating animals. Is there any room for doubt that if phoenixes or unicorns were to become the fashion, they would turn up by the score as soon as wanted?

It is not possible that any one, possessed of any reflective power, and being in the habit of frequenting the various kinds of social celebrations, slavery to which forms the principal occupation of a large portion of civilised society, can have failed to speculate on the momentous question, Where do all the plovers' eggs come from? They appear at all sorts of meals — dinners, wedding breakfasts, show luncheons, pic-nics, evening-party refreshment tables, ball suppers. In all sorts of forms, too, do they appear: nestling in moss, held in bondage caressingly by succulent jelly, pearly and cool, the golden yolk just suggested through the semi-transparent white. Prodigious good they are, in whatever shape presented, but prodigiously mysterious also, in their faculty of turning up in enormous quantities for the London season, and then disappearing with equally strange and inexplicable despatch. Very rarely does one encounter these plovers' eggs except during the London season; and as to the plovers themselves, now and then, in crossing a breezy upland, the pedestrian's attention is caught by their shrill plaintive cry and their rapid flight round and round his head, as they seek to draw him away from the nest which lies close by; but it is only now and then that the plovers are thus met with, and even where they are thickest, their numbers do not account for those innumerable dishes full of their eggs.

And naturally associated with the plovers' egg difficulty, is another: I mean the great champagne mystery. The consumption of this beverage is confined to no particular place, nor to any especial season of the year. Always, everywhere, by everybody, this favourite drink is appreciated. One would think that the supply required for this country alone, and during that one period of the year which we call "the season," would exhaust the produce of all the vineyards the champagne districts can furnish. Let the reader consider the Derby Day, or merely take it in conjunction with the Cup Day at Ascot, and then endeavour to form some dimly approximate notion of the quantity of champagne required. There are those who have seen the champagne dripping through the floors of carriages on Epsom Downs: and even *those who have not* been favoured with that rich

experience, but have merely witnessed the ordinary performances during the luncheon hours there, are able to form a tolerably accurate idea of the rate at which champagne disappears on the occasion of those wondrous orgies. At the Ascot Meeting it is the same story. The same at Goodwood, Doncaster, Newmarket. At all the minor races, at Henley, at every regatta held at Cowes or Ryde, or anywhere, and on all those occasions of a more private nature at which we have just seen the dishes of plovers' eggs making a goodly appearance, it is again the same. The thought of all the champagne required for England, not to speak of the still greater quantities needed for the supply of Continental capitals, and there not alone for those great festal occasions when royal personages meet together and are entertained at banquets, balls, and the like, but for all the smaller and snugger meals which come off at restaurants, cafés, hotels, and taverns—the thought, I say, of all this champagne, and all this society as I may say floating in it, becomes distracting.

But where does that same creamy liquor all come from? We all know that we are expected to swallow a great deal in connexion with our wine besides the liquid itself. It requires a most remarkable amount of faith to suppose that those small tracts of land which give their name to the more renowned growths of France and Germany, can supply all the cellars throughout Europe. An enigma this, which, with regard to other wines, may be looked upon as simply a difficulty: but which, when champagne is in question, culminates into an impossibility.

The milk and cream, again, supplied twice a day to the inhabitants of England, and for the furnishing of which — since fresh milk cannot be imported from other countries — we are dependent on the resources of the British cows — the enormous daily yield of this article of consumption is a thing not to be thought of without wonder. Summon before the mind the vast area of London and its suburbs, and remember that in every street, square, place, terrace, court, blind alley, throughout its enormous extent from Highgate and Hornsey in the north, to Camberwell and Dulwich in the south, and from Wimbledon and Putney in the west to Rotherhithe, Hackney, Bow, in the east, the clink of the milk-pail is heard twice every day throughout the year, Sundays included. And all this professes, remember, to be new milk, so that in addition there must be taken into account an entirely separate reservoir of milk set aside for the development of all that mass of cream which is required, at certain times of year, for the supply of the metropolis. What a supply must that be! Think of all the ice-creams sold at all the pastry-cooks' shops besides those which are served up in private houses! Think of all the cream eaten with strawberries, of the cream required for cooking purposes, of the recipes of those great artists who are always directing their disciples to "take a quart of cream," or to "add a pint

of good cream," or "now throw in" a pint or so of cream! And, besides, what becomes of all this supply of milk and cream when it is no longer wanted in the metropolis? On the thirtieth of June it is required; on the thirtieth of July it is not. The main body of cream-consumers have by that time left London and are dispersed over the world. Do the cows follow them?

A solution of some of the above-stated difficulties might be afforded by supposing the existence—not a very wide stretch of imagination—of a wholesale system of adulteration. It is possible to make champagne, for instance, and, alas! I fear, milk and cream too, to order; but no manufactory can turn out plovers' eggs to order. And where are the iron-works, sawmills, or galvanised-zinc factories that can contract to supply an unlimited number of sweetbreads—by the by, another delicacy required, like the plovers' eggs, on a huge scale during the London season, and hardly wanted at other times!

SORROW AND THE MERMAID.

IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER II.

ONE morning, Irene told me she could not remain out our usual time, for she had letters to write before breakfast; but that if I liked I could come and see her after twelve o'clock.

When I went she was not alone. A man, evidently a messenger, was with her, to whom she was giving instructions and letters. She shook hands with me, and went on. He bowed, and she dismissed him with a sigh of relief.

"I am so tired," she said, and she looked thoroughly overcome; more fragile than the white rose in her belt.

"You have been writing too much."

"It seems strange, does it not, to hear a poor cripple say so, but I have been doing a great deal to-day."

"Why do you do it?"

"Why? What would become of me if I did not put my life to some use? Do you think I could submit to be like a log here day after day, deprived, bereaved of all, if there were not some duties I had made for myself? I beg your pardon."

She had spoken with a flushed cheek and flashing eyes. She must have over-tired herself, or the rigid self-control which made her so reticent as regarded her own sufferings, would not have permitted even this slight allusion to her state.

"There are some who serve God and their fellow-creatures actively, others passively. 'They also serve who only stand and wait.' You know it was Milton who said so."

Her face relaxed into a smile, a mournful, gentle one; but it was more pathetic than tears. I would not continue a subject which had so much of emotion in it.

"Where is Sorrow?"

"Is he not there?" She looked over the side of the couch.

"No, I do not see him."

"Sometimes he finds my letter writing tedious, and goes off marauding in the garden, or he pays a visit to the Mertons. He usually gets very mischievous if he finds I am not attending to him. He tore up a cushion the other day, and I had to send him away with one of the servants for a walk. Sometimes he takes off something of mine, and hides it, or buries it, or carries it in great triumph to the Mertons. The other day he went off with a pair of my gloves which had slipped off the couch, and he took them and deposited them at Mr. Merton's feet. Another day he found a photograph, and carried it in with him, and put it on the English secretary's knee. It was a caricature of Lord Raglan. You may fancy the effect it produced."

"I came through your friend's drawing-room just now, but your dog was not there."

"Was their salon full?"

"Pretty well." I named several persons who were there, among them Madame de Beaufort.

"Madame de Beaufort!"

"Yes. I did not see her husband."

"Oh, no! I know he went away an hour ago." She said this hastily and involuntarily, and seemed sorry she had said it.

"Poor Madame de Beaufort!"

She sat up on her couch and looked very grave.

"Why do you say poor?"

"Because her husband does not make her happy, and gives her cause for jealousy."

"Of whom?" she asked, imperiously.

The question and the tone irritated me.

"I am not responsible, of course, for the gossip of Pera, but it is said that Monsieur de Beaufort has no eyes but for——"

"Pray do not hesitate; the Countess Irene, is it not?"

"Yes!"

"I should have supposed," she answered, "that I, of all women, ought to be spared such suspicions, fenced away as I am by my cruel helplessness from the ordinary weaknesses of my sex."

"You know I was not speaking in my own name. Last night Madame de Beaufort seemed very miserable, and I was sorry for her. Her husband neglects her, and she meets with no sympathy from her family."

"That may be, but is it my fault? The one only social intimacy I have ever permitted myself is this friendship with her parents. I like them for themselves, am grateful for their unvarying kindness, and with me gratitude is a duty, a passion, a religion; and I like them because they are what they are—Americans, and not Europeans. Why should I separate from them to please her? As to her husband—but I scorn to justify myself, let her think what she pleases. At least, I have two firm friends in you and Sorrow."

She smiled and held out her hand. Her words touched me to the heart. "Two firm friends!" I repeated, as I pressed her hand.

She closed her eyes for a minute or two and then opened them suddenly, and asked me abruptly,

"What do you think of that face?"

I followed the direction of her eyes. Opposite her couch was a photographic portrait, life size, of a man.

There was something very noble and commanding in his air. The eyes were keen and penetrating. There was force and energy in every lineament of the face. Its predominant characteristic was utter ruthlessness. It was a face more to fear than to trust. In the eyes was an expression of dauntless daring, which seemed as if they must have compelled obedience in the most rebellious. It was the face of a leader, but not of a patriot or a hero.

"It is a striking countenance," I said. "Who is it? . . . Beg your pardon."

"It is the portrait of the man to whom I owe everything."

"Your—?"

"My nothing," she said. "The tie between us is of his making alone. He has been my benefactor, my saviour, my earthly providence. He is my guide and my conscience, and I am a thing in his hands, to be bent and moulded according to his will. Like the corpse which the Jesuits think is the proper ideal to be held up for the imitation of their neophytes. The Ego dead, and the brain and heart but instruments for others to use."

These words gave me exquisite pain, I do not know why. Did they solve the *enigma of her life*?

At that moment her servant entered and spoke to her hastily in German.

"Yes," I heard her say, "let him come in."

The same messenger who had been with her when I entered returned. He spoke volubly, and she started up with displeasure.

"How extraordinary! I gave him three packets, and he says I gave him but two. He must have dropped one."

The man brought her desk, she opened it and examined its contents, but the missing packet was not there. They looked about the room, under the couch, but it was nowhere to be seen.

"I must write it all over again, and he leaves this evening. I would not have this happen for the world."

"Can I help you? Cannot you dictate to me?"

She looked at me with a curious expression. "It would be a great help, but I do not write in English or French."

"I can write German."

"No, I had better do it myself, and at once. Au revoir." She held out her hand. It was burning, the blue veins under the transparent surface could have been counted, they were so distinctly traced. On her cheek were two red spots, and her eyes looked dilated and dazzlingly bright. I took my leave, descended the stairs of her private apartments, for I did not care to go through the drawing-room again, and passed through the garden. Had I known that I should never be in that garden again with Irene, I should not have dashed through it so hastily, I think, but I was angry—angry with myself and perhaps with her too.

Grubbing in a corner of it I saw Sorrow. He was scratching with his fore-paws behind some bushes in that quick furtive manner with which dogs bury a bone. When he had concluded he tore after me (I had reached the outer gate), as if to ask me why I left. I stooped down and caressed him, and saw a paper between his jaws, which I took from him, and threw away as I caressed him. I told the intelligent beast his mistress was waiting for him, and after looking in my face with those great, brown, wistful eyes of his, he turned and rushed into the house. As I looked after him I saw a white dress coming towards the spot where I stood, and not wishing to meet any one, I left at once.

That same evening I heard she was too

tired to appear at the Mertons, and when I went to inquire for her, they told me she had had a fainting fit, which had left her so exhausted, that she had gone to bed. For several days she was too ill to see any one. One morning I was told that if I waited she would come into the balcony of the sitting-room appropriated to her. The morning excursions had not been recommenced, but she still came on to the balcony for a little fresh air. Her maid told me that the motion of the litter was too much for her now.

"Surely," I said, "she must be suddenly much worse?"

"Yes," said the maid, a Frenchwoman, "ever since that morning my lady went to see the English ship, her strength has seemed ebbing away."

She returned to her mistress's rooms. As I stood waiting in the ante-room, I saw Madame de Beaufort coming towards me from the Mertons' drawing-room. Her whole person and manner seemed eager and excited as she approached.

"I have been more fortunate than I expected when I saw you last."

She held up to me a crumpled half-torn fold of paper.

"It is all written in cipher, but I shall study it till I have deciphered it."

"Did you find it, or did Sorrow bring it you?" I asked, ironically. "It looks like a piece of paper I took from between his teeth the other day. I dare say he has buried the rest. I am afraid you will find it is much ado about nothing."

She passed on. I was glad she had left me, for I saw through the open doors the glitter of Irene's coverlet as she was brought into her sitting-room and placed on her couch.

I was shocked to see the alteration in her. She was painfully changed. Her face was marble white, her eyes looked unnaturally large and bright, and her features were sharpened and attenuated, as after a fever. Her voice was almost inaudible. Sorrow was beside her, licking her hand and caressing her. The thin little pale hand stroked his head with a tenderness which, I confess, I was fool enough to envy.

"Sorrow has been more than usually affectionate these last few days. He seems full of contrition for having played truant. He returned out of breath and in the greatest tribulation after you left me. I told him I suspected him of having gone off with my missing letter, and of having

swallowed it, and he by no means denied it. In fact, he looked as if he confessed it, and to confess is almost to atone, so I have absolved him."

She smiled one of her rare sweet smiles. A chill went to my heart as I listened to her. Was that the letter in cipher which Madame de Beaufort had found?

About a fortnight afterwards a murmur of indignation arose among the English in Constantinople, in consequence of a rumour that the French had made peace, or rather that negotiations for the purpose of making peace were going on between them and the Czar.

It was hard on Madame de Beaufort that every one belonging to her should swell the court of a woman she disliked and suspected. But no change arose in this regard, either in her dislike or her suspicion: and in her presence Irene seemed under some fatal charm. She was no longer bright and charming, but pale, silent, and drooping.

One day Caradoc expostulated with me gently on my being so engrossed with her.

"I cannot understand it, Eden. De Beaufort's infatuation is explicable—he has a spice of madness in him, but yours——"

"Do not class us together, I beg."

"Your countess does, I think. After talking sentiment and high art with you in the morning, she admits De Beaufort in the afternoon."

"Say he inflicts himself upon her."

Caradoc smiled. "As you please; you are as mad as he is. I do not pretend, however, to say that *they* talk of sentiment or art."

I parted from Caradoc moodily.

That evening I went to her as usual. Her litter had been placed in the balcony. There was a mysterious and solemn shadow on her face, though it was white as a lily. Her hands were clayey cold.

"You are ill," I said, anxiously.

"Almost worn out; there are only a few grains of sand left in the hour-glass—it is nearly run out."

I stooped down to kiss her hand. I did not wish her to see the terror which had blanched my cheek as I looked at her.

"Ah! friend," she said, with an accent I cannot describe, "how thankful I am to have known you! Your friendship has given a glorious sunset to my stormy life. No, you must not contradict me, I am very contented. I have even been happy at

times; but you must confess that, for me, death is best. You cannot look me in the face and not say so."

"I can! I do! you have made your life so rich in good deeds and good influences, that no one could honestly echo such a sentiment."

"The end is coming, I feel. There is only one thing, Paul, you must promise me:" she now spoke with feverish excitement. "After my death, do not condemn me, whatever you may hear of me, until you have read a letter which I have written, and which will then be given to you. There are mysteries in my life which, while I breathe, I cannot disclose; but I could not rest in my grave without justifying myself to you. Until I am laid in it, have faith in me."

I sealed my promise by kissing the hand which lay outside the coverlet.

"There is another thing; will you take my dog home with you *to-night*?"

I answered, yes, with a tightening at my heart which taught me that her emotion was contagious. After a time I tried to rouse myself to cheer her, and our succeeding conversation was not wholly sad. She said she had known unparalleled sorrows, but had also known most exquisite joys. By-and-by, after a silence, she repeated, with a return of that uncommon agitation, half raising herself from her couch:

"Mind! If you hear me accused, suspend your judgment. Within the last six weeks a hideous doubt has sprung up in me, that I have done wrong—but—I was deeply grateful to him, and I had sworn obedience——"

She sank back and was silent for a few minutes; then I saw her lips part, and heard her murmur faintly, "Father, forgive me, I knew not what I did." There was silence again, and then she said, with a shudder, "It is cold; let me be carried in."

I rang the little silver bell, and her attendants came, and she was carried back into the drawing-room. I followed her. The couch was placed, as usual, in the centre of the room. The lamps were not lighted, but the faint moonlight struggling in at the windows fell on the couch. It might have been a tomb with the white indication of a recumbent effigy on it. I sat near her with Sorrow (strangely quiet) at my feet. The quiet was intense. I do not know how many minutes were so passed when I heard a distant door open abruptly and voices speaking hastily. Then, with a quick step, Madame de Beaufort entered.

"I am glad I find you here, Mr. Eden: you will witness what I say. I have long suspected what I now know. Seizing the clue given me by your remark that this paper, picked up by me in the garden below, had been torn by the dog, I showed it to the dog. He recognised it, and piece by piece brought me all that was missing of the document of which it is a part. I told you that I would master the cipher in which it is written, and I *have* mastered it. Its writer—that woman who hears me—will contradict me, if what I charge her with is false. I charge her with being a Russian Spy. She has deceived, she has entrapped, she has betrayed. It has been her infamous trade to deceive, entrap, and betray. She has broken my heart, but I fear her no more, for she is a Spy!"

The scorn of her voice was terrible.

No word of reply. The hand I held did not tremble, there was not a quiver in the frail form.

At this moment the door was again opened, and M. de Beaufort rushed in. He did not see his wife, or me.

"Irene, rejoice! the news is confirmed, France has made peace with the Czar!"

"She has fainted," I said.

The servants had now entered with lights. I took one in my hand and bent over her. Good God! what look was that on the still, pale face! Was it appealing, imploring, upbraiding? Be it what it might, it was the last look of the Dead.

Madame de Beaufort asked me, "Have I killed her?" I answered "No! She was so nearly dead when you came in, that I think she did not even hear you speak." She rose, drew down her veil and left the room.

I took De Beaufort's nerveless hand and led him from the room. I closed the eyes that had so enchanted and entranced me. The face was as the face of the Angel of Death.

This a Spy!

With throbbing brain and beating heart I recalled our intercourse, so brief in time, so long if counted by the power of its influence over my soul.

O look upon her, look upon her! *This*, a Spy! And I loved her. Yes, at this supreme moment I knew I had loved her. I loved her with a love which had so little of earth in it that Death had no power over it. Selfishness, Passion had no part in it. But as I over and over again repeated, without meaning or purpose, the shameful words "A Spy!" an overwhelm-

ing pity arose in me, and solemnly hovered over the silent form, like the spectre of my love.

I went home, and a few hours afterwards Merton came to me. He had found a letter addressed to himself on her writing-table. She had foreseen that she would die suddenly, and had written her last wishes in it. A telegram announcing her decease was to be sent to a certain address in St. Petersburg. No time was lost in despatching it. An answer came, requesting that seals might be put on all her effects until a confidential person should arrive from St. Petersburg and take charge of them. And, in compliance with her strict direction, she was to be buried in the sea.

The coffin containing her remains, was placed on the litter she had used in life, and carried on board a small yacht belonging to the Mertons, wherein those faithful friends of hers, and I, put out to sea. The prayers of the Greek church were read, and the coffin, covered with its shining pall (the coverlet which had caused her to be called the Mermaid), was lowered into the peaceful Deep.

Not many tides had rolled over it, when a packet sealed with the imperial arms of Russia, was put into my hands.

This packet contained the letter she had spoken of. Nothing besides the letter. Thus it ran :

I am a Spy. Know how and why I came to be that infamous and shameful thing. At sixteen, I—a child even younger than my age, in feeling, in education, in principle—was married to Count Ivan Vassiloff, a man sixty years old. Up to the time of my marriage I had lived in the happiest home in the world. I played and danced, and thought Life meant laughter and mirth and pleasure. My husband was, without a doubt, the most cruel of men: He was stern, vindictive, and suspicious. He was madly in love with me, and madly jealous of me.

I had married him to please my parents. I had no prepossession in favour of any one else, and I could have learned to love him; but he made me abhor him, and defy him.

One day, after two years of hard usage, he informed me that he intended taking me to a country house he possessed near Moscow, where, in solitude and quiet, I might learn to forget the frivolities of my youth. I went with him. For, in spite of all, I had not learned to fear him.

We arrived at a gloomy house in the

centre of a yet gloomier forest, some forty miles south of Moscow, and fifteen miles away from the nearest village. In the forest were the hovels of a few serfs, but no other habitation, save his.

My heart sank as I retired to rest. "He will murder me," I thought, "and no one will ever know it." I believe the wine I had drunk at supper was drugged.

When I awoke, I was in the dark. I felt about, but instead of papered walls or carpeted floor, I touched nothing but cold stone. I screamed, and the echoes of my screams seemed to resound as from a vault. At last I fainted. When I came to my senses, my husband, with a lamp in his hand, was bending over me. I was on a low pallet bed covered with woollen cloth, in a lofty stone dungeon.

"You are now wholly in my power," said my husband, "and until your wicked temper is subdued, you shall remain here. When you have learned to obey me in all things and submit yourself wholly to me, I will restore you to liberty, and we will travel. You shall never see St. Petersburg again, for I intend to announce your death to your parents and to the world."

I was like a fury, and I had the triumph for a moment of making even him turn pale, but I was wholly in his power, and that fact restored him to himself, and made him insensible to my denunciations. He told me that twice a week he would bring me food, and that at those times I would have the opportunity of begging his pardon and beseeching his indulgence.

I took an oath to rot in that dungeon rather than yield to him. I kept my oath, but how I suffered! An ardent, bright, joyous temperament like mine condemned at eighteen to darkness and solitude. How I did not go mad, I cannot divine. I was buoyed up, perhaps, with a sense that my wretched captivity could not last, that deliverance *must* come. I used to sing while I could; but after the first year my voice became too weak for that, and then I used to compose verses and repeat them aloud, and try to remember all I had read, and invent stories, and declaim scenes out of the plays I had seen. I never once spoke to him, in five long dreary years. He spoke fiercely to me, as often as he came; but I never answered. Sometimes I believe he thought I had grown deaf, he would shout so loudly to me. He had shown me the notice of my death sent to my parents and their reply: so I knew I was cut off from the living. Still I hoped. Morning and evening I

prayed to be rescued. At last the hour came. On one of the days of his coming, his angry threats and reproaches, raising the echoes of the place, were heard without by a child at play near a ruined well. It had always been a wonder to the poor serfs in the forest, why their master should persistently remain in a house he had never before visited. There had been a rumour that his wife had accompanied him on his arrival, had been taken ill, and had died a day or two later. There had been a funeral, but the whole transaction had been mysterious, and no one had seen me. The Count had brought with him but one servant wholly devoted to him, and he had been sent away after the funeral. The mother of the child at play, could not believe his story when he ran home, frightened, to tell it; but she determined to listen for herself next day, and returned to listen day by day until she heard the voice. She recognised it (as the child had done), and could almost distinguish the words spoken. With a reticence marvellous in one of her class, she told no one, but made her way to the village fifteen miles off, and confided her secret to a priest there! She convinced him, and he went to St. Petersburg.

Passing from mouth to mouth, his story at length reached the emperor, who put my wrong at once into the hands of one able and willing to right it. It was his portrait you saw in my room. Within a month, I was borne up into the light of day and the world of the living, after an entombment of more than five years.

I had preserved my life through the darkness and the silence, but my limbs were dead. No relative remained to me. Very slowly I came to bear the light and to recover health. It was then that I set myself to fulfil another vow I had made in that horrible tomb. I had sworn there to devote myself, body and soul, to my deliverer, if deliverance should ever come. I had sworn to be his slave, and to subject myself, body and brain, to his will. I told this to my deliverer. He looked at me steadfastly. "Are these only words?" he said. "Try me," I replied.

I did not at first comprehend the full scope of the service required of me. Vassiloff had been sent to Siberia, his great wealth had been transferred to me

for my life, and every external circumstance was in favour of my doing that service well. Travelling was needful for my health, and I had that ostensible reason for visiting the various places to which I was sent. I was furnished with letters to the most important persons in the countries I visited, and the political events and personages of those countries were to be watched and influenced with my utmost skill, according to directions I received.

He understood me thoroughly, and knew that I should die if I had not something to love. When I first left St. Petersburg he brought me my poor dog. It was my most stringent order to make no European friend. The name of the dog was to be a perpetual reminder of my deliverance, and my bondage and fealty to my deliverer. I obeyed my benefactor in all things, until I disobeyed him by making a friend of you, and I pay the penalty. Until some six weeks since, I had no scruple, no doubt or hesitation. At about that time my eyes seemed suddenly opened to my disgrace. I owe that enlightenment to the change wrought in me by my association with you. But the knowledge has killed me. Better that I had perished in my dungeon than been released to do the evil I have done—God knows how blindly and unwittingly! You know all now. I have tried to atone to the woman who is my bitter enemy by writing her an avowal of my purpose in fascinating her husband.

I have told her it is for his eyes too. She had no small need to be jealous of me, and she will be avenged in his detestation of my memory. *You can forgive me, can you not?*

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VERONICA.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE."

IN FIVE BOOKS.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER XIII. JOE DOWSETT'S NEWS.

It was not far from ten o'clock when Joe Dowsett returned from Shipley Magna. Joe was in some respects an excellent servant, but he had his failings—among which might be reckoned an inability to resist strong liquor when proffered gratuitously. During twenty years Joe had not been known to be drunk at his own expense. But a visit to the Crown at Shipley Magna, where he was an old crony and customer of the head ostler, was pretty sure to result in Joe's partial intoxication.

On the present occasion he had ridden to Shipley and back on the old pony, the sole beast of burthen belonging to the vicar. And Joe attributed the enormous amount of time occupied in the journey, to his own remarkable humanity to the pony.

"Mustn't press him hard, the old beast," said Joe, on his return, standing before the kitchen fire, the heat of which caused his wet clothes to steam again.

"No fear of *you* pressing him hard to come away from the Crown," retorted Joanna.

"I advise you to get to your bed, and take off them damp things. Else you'll be getting a fever, or the rheumatics, or something. Only," she added, under her breath, "only we know there's a special providence for certain folks; and I'm sure you're one on 'em this night, Joe Dowsett."

"All right, Jo-anna. I feel pretty comfortable, thank 'ee. No, no; mustn't press the old pony. The merciful man is merciful to his beast."

At this moment Catherine came back from the sitting-room, whither she had been, according to orders, to give her master the tidings of Joe's return.

"Master's fine and vexed," she said, "at Joe being so late. He said he wanted to send Joe to fetch home Miss Veronica if he had come at any reasonable hour. But now it's too late."

"Why was he unwilling to let her stay at Mrs. Plew's?" asked Joanna.

"O, I don't know. Miss Veronica has stayed there before. But the vicar said as he'd have gone to fetch her himself, only it's such a night, and been getting worse and worse since sundown. I think master feels lonely after being used to Sir John's company. And then both the young ladies being away the first evening and all—it's made him cross. He says he shall go to bed, and you're to send him up a slice of dry toast and a glass of negus, with not too much nutmeg in it."

"Negus ain't a bad thing," observed Joe Dowsett.

"You go to your bed, Joe, for mercy's sake!" cried the old woman, impatiently. "Don't stand a steaming there like a copper on washing day."

"I feel pretty comfortable, Jo-anna. I see a friend of yours at the Crown this evening—Mr. Paul."

"Paul at the Crown!" exclaimed Catherine.

"Yes, Paul at the Crown. He pretended not to see me, and skulked through the tap-room like a rat. Sir John's a gentleman. I say nothing against Sir John. But Paul—Paul's a sneak."

"Don't you talk nonsense. Paul never did you no harm," said Joanna. "And I don't believe you saw him at all to-night."

"You don't believe—?"

"No, I don't. Him and his master was to sleep at Danecester last night, and go off by an early train this morning. It ain't likely as Paul should be at the Crown at Shipley Magna all alone. You must have took somebody else for him. Paul would have spoke to you, if it had been him. Why shouldn't he?"

Joe turned on her with crushing severity.

"P'raps you'll say I was drunk next, Jo-anna!"

"O Lord no, I shan't say so. Maybe you were dreaming. But never mind now. Go to bed; there's a good man."

It proved very difficult indeed to induce Joe to go to bed, however. He protested over and over again that he felt pretty comfortable. Then he required Joanna and Catherine to declare solemnly that they believed his statement about having seen Paul: which, finding it hopeless to get him to go to bed on any other terms, they unscrupulously did. Then he very unexpectedly declared that he and Paul had lived together like brothers; that there was no one for whom he felt a warmer regard; and that Paul's cold and unkind behaviour had cut him to the heart. At last, by dint of scolding and coaxing, he was got to his own room; the door of which Joanna shut, with a fervent prayer that they might not all be burnt in their beds, and with a gleam of comfort in the knowledge that the end of candle entrusted to Joe could not last above five minutes.

"Ain't it queer, Joe taking that notion about seeing Paul?" said Catherine, when she and Joanna were alone together. "Do you think it could ha' been—could ha' been—what's that you call it when a person's ghost walks before they're dead, as a kind of a warning. Like that story you tell of the eldest son where you lived kitchen-maid long ago? Oh, I know—a fetch. That's the name. Do you think it could ha' been Paul's fetch?"

"Pooh, child! Servants don't have no fetches. Them kind of things only belongs to great families. Don't you go scaring your wits with such fancies, or I shall never tell you no more of my stories."

"But," persisted the girl, "Joe said that the figure passed through the room very quick and silent, and with its head turned away, and—"

"Well, if its head was turned away, how was Joe to know who it was? It's just a drunken man's fancy, I tell you. Go to your bed. It's nigh upon eleven, and I

have seen to the fastenings of the doors. Good-night. When Joe's sober to-morrow, he will tell another story, I warrant."

But the next morning Joe told no other story. On the contrary, he persisted in his former assertion, and confirmed it by proof, which it was impossible to doubt. He had remarked Paul's presence at the Crown to his friend the head ostler, and the ostler had said, yes; he knew him well enough. He was the foreign servant of that rich barrowknight, as owned such neat nags, and had put up at the Crown for his hunting quarters. But in reply to a question as to what Paul had come there for, the ostler professed ignorance. It might be to fetch some traps of his master's. The ostler believed that there had been a pork-manty or something of that kind left in the landlord's care. Paul had brought a fly from the hotel at Danecester, and was to go back in it. So he (the ostler) supposed that he had to carry luggage.

"But why Paul shouldn't speak to me I don't know, nor I don't much care," said Joe Dowsett, whose feelings towards his dear friend had come down to their ordinary level of stolid indifference, since the influence of his potations had subsided.

"I couldn't have believed as Paul would have give hisself such airs," exclaimed Catherine, with a toss of her head. She felt that Paul's slight of Joe Dowsett was a reflection on the rest of the vicar's household.

About eleven o'clock in the forenoon Maud arrived from Lowwater. Captain Sheardown had driven her to Shipley, and had set her down at the vicarage without alighting himself, purposing to proceed to Haymoor.

"Where is Veronica?" was Maud's first question to her guardian.

"Veronica has displeased me very much," answered the vicar. "She went to drink tea with old Mrs. Plew, and chose to remain there all night, although she knows—or might know if she had any sort of filial desire to ascertain my sentiments on any subject whatever—that I object to her putting herself under any obligation of that kind to the Plews."

Maud looked grave, but said sweetly, "Please don't be very angry with her, Uncle Charles. It was a dreadfully stormy night. Perhaps she was afraid of the walk home."

"She was assuredly not afraid of incurring my displeasure, whatever else she may have feared," said the vicar.

Maud made no further direct efforts to avert her guardian's wrath; but she took the most effectual means of putting him into a good humour, by gaily chatting about all the little incidents of her visit to Lowater, the concert at Danecester, and the people who had been to the house.

She was in the midst of her talk, sitting, still with her hat in her hand, in the vicar's study, when the door of the room was opened a very little way, and a voice cried: "Miss Maud, Miss Maud! Would ye please step here a moment?"

The voice was old Joanna's; but so strange and muffled in its tone, that an unreasoning apprehension of impending evil fell upon Maud's heart.

She sprang up, and forcing a smile, said: "Uncle Charles, I must go for an instant to say a word to Joanna. I'll be back as soon as possible. The dear old woman has some mighty mystery on hand."

She closed the study door with an instinctive care, for which she could never afterwards account, and faced a countenance which seemed, like Medusa's fabled head, to turn her into stone.

The countenance was Joanna's. But so changed, ghastly, and aged was it that Maud would hardly, under other circumstances, have recognised the familiar features.

"What is the matter, Joanna?" she asked, in quick low tones, whose firmness surprised herself.

"My dear Maudie," answered the trembling old woman, "my sweet young lady, don't ye lose your head. It's all we've got to depend on! I feel my years now, as I never felt 'em before."

Maud made a silent, eloquent gesture of impatience.

"Yes, I will speak, deary. Mr.—Mr. Plew's here. He looked in by—by—chance like. And—O Lord be merciful to us, and spare us!—he says, Miss Veronica is not at his mother's, and what's more, hasn't been there all night. And what to do, or what to say, or what will become of the vicar, I don't know!"

"Hush! Where is Mr. Plew? Take me to him. There is some mistake, some misunderstanding. No harm can have happened to Veronica, here, in her own home, amongst her own people! It is impossible!"

"O my deary, Mr. Plew is more like a mad creature than anything else. And as to harm—. My innocent young lady, it goes to my heart to hurt you, but I'm afraid—I'm sore afraid—"

"Of what?"

The old woman made no answer, but moaned and wrung her hands.

A dreadful apprehension took hold of Maud that Mr. Plew had brought some fatal and decisive tidings; that Veronica was dead, and that the old servant was endeavouring to break the news to her. Collecting her senses as well as she could, she bade Joanna take her to Mr. Plew at once, and let her know the worst.

Joanna pointed to the door of the dining-parlour, and Maud sprang into the room.

CHAPTER XIV. FLED.

JOANNA had not much exaggerated in saying that Mr. Plew was "more like a madman than anything else." He did seem to have nearly lost his senses.

"O, Miss Desmond!" he cried, as soon as he caught sight of Maud, and then stood dumb with clasped hands.

"Please to tell me at once. It will be kinder, indeed it will! Is she dead?"

The utterance of the word seemed to force a gush of tears from Maud's eyes, but she struggled hard to command herself.

The little surgeon recovered some spark of manhood and courage, at sight of the young girl's piteous, innocent face. His professional helpfulness came to his aid, and took him away from the contemplation of his own distress.

"Don't try too violently to force back your tears," he said. "Let them come. You will not let them master you. No; I do not think Veronica is dead. No, on my honour. I would not deceive you!"

"What is it then? Is she ill? Has there been any accident? Is she in danger?"

"I wish to Heaven, Miss Desmond, that I could answer your questions. All I know is, that Miss Levincourt did not sleep at my mother's house last night—did not even go there at all—and yet she sent word here by the boy that she meant to do so."

"But the boy may have mistaken her message. She may have said that she was going elsewhere. Have you asked? Have you inquired in the village? Joanna's face and—yours have infected me with terror. But I cannot—I cannot—believe that there is any real ground for alarm."

"Alarm!" echoed the voice of Mr. Levincourt, and the next instant he stood in the room.

Any attempt at concealment was out of the question. A glance at the faces of

Maud and Mr. Plew sufficed to show the vicar that some terrible misfortune had happened.

"Dear Uncle Charles," said Maud, taking his hand, "Mr. Plew has told us that Veronica was not at his mother's house last night. Don't, pray don't, give way to terror, dear Uncle Charles. It has been some mistake of Jemmy Sack. I am sure, quite sure of it. What harm *can* have happened? We should have been sure to hear of any accident, you know. Ill news always travels quickly. We were startled, at first, but now I am coming to my senses a little, and I see how foolish it was to be so frightened!"

The poor child was trembling in every limb, and the hand with which she clasped the vicar's was as cold as marble.

Some men in Mr. Levincourt's case would have rushed instantly forth; would have sought here and there; would have inquired feverishly; would, in brief, have been spurred by their anxiety into immediate energy and action.

But the vicar was at first stunned, not stimulated, by the blow. He sank down in a chair like one whose bodily powers had been suddenly paralysed.

"The first thing to be done," said Maud, "is to send Joe into the village. Let him go to Sack's farm and try to find Jemmy. Then he might go or send to the Meggitts. It is possible that Veronica may have gone there. Miss Turtle and the girls were always asking her. And you will make inquiries, won't you Mr. Plew? I see more and more, how foolish it was to be so frightened!"

The vicar, as he recovered from the first shock and as Maud's elastic courage and young hopefulness rose higher and higher, and began to chase away the first ghastly fear that had crushed him, displayed an unexpected phase of feeling: he grew angry. He resented the pain he had been made to suffer.

"I think, Mr. Plew," he said, in a voice whose trembling tones were by no means under control, "I must say that I think it highly inconsiderate on your part to come here and cause so very terrible—so unspeakably terrible—an alarm, without having better grounds for it."

The little man, who seemed to be entirely uninfluenced by Maud's cheering suggestions, stood silent, and cast an appealing glance at the young girl.

"Law dear, sir!" cried old Joanna, who *had remained in the room*, "don't ye say

that! Mr. Plew came here without knowing a thing about Miss Veronica. He was took aback and scared well-nigh as much as you was, when I opened the door and asked him where she was, and why she hadn't come home with him."

"Is Joe gone? Is he going?" exclaimed the vicar, rising from his chair, and speaking now with nervous rapidity. "Why does no one exert any energy? I shall go in one direction myself—Joe must take another—to Sack's farm—d'ye hear? And, Plew, you will—you will search—" Then a sudden terror overcame him, and he fell back into the chair again with a groan. "My child! my child!" he cried. "Oh, my child! At this moment she may be—dead!"

"No, no, no—not that!" exclaimed Mr. Plew, eagerly. "Not that! I do not believe she is dead. I do not believe she is hurt. That is not what I fear."

"Then, sir, what is it you do fear? It is not this, and it is not that! What means have you of knowing? And how should you understand a parent's natural apprehensions, or undertake to limit them? Have you," he added, suddenly, having caught a glance of intelligence that passed between the surgeon and Joanna: "have you any information that you are concealing from me?"

"No! No!"

"You have! I see it in your face—and in hers. Joanna, I insist, I command, you to speak! Plew, if you think it kind to keep me in suspense, you are cruelly mistaken. Tell me the truth!"

"Mr. Levincourt, as God is my witness, I know nothing! I do not, upon my soul! But I—I had a momentary fear—a mere momentary suspicion—that—"

"*Suspicion*, sir!"

"That—that Miss Levincourt might have left her home, purposing not to return to it."

"H—how *dare* you?" gasped the vicar; and then suddenly ceased, as though the words were arrested in his throat and were almost choking him.

"Untie his neckcloth!" cried the surgeon, springing forward. The vicar waved him off, but suffered old Joanna to obey Mr. Plew's directions.

Maud looked from one to another in an agony of bewilderment.

"Left her home!" she exclaimed. "Veronica leave her home, purposing not to return to it! How? Why?"

"Whisht, my deary!" muttered Joanna,

still busied about her master. "Don't ye give way. It may not be so bad as we're afraid."

"So bad as what? What does Mr. Plew mean? What are you all afraid of? Oh, Veronica!"

"Here he is, sir! Here's Jemmy!" cried Joe Dowsett, dragging Jemmy Sack into the room after him. "I was on my way to the farm when I met him. Now speak, you young rascal, and tell his reverence what Miss Veronica said to you!"

The boy was flushed, panting, and very much frightened. Joe had expended a great part of his own painful excitement in haling Jemmy Sack to the vicarage with very unnecessary violence.

"I bain't a young rascal!" said Jemmy, driven to bay. "And I told the message here last night as Miss Veroniky said, so I did."

"Don't be afraid, Jemmy," said Maud, trying to soothe the boy. "No one will hurt you. You have done no harm."

"No, I knows I haven't!" retorted Jemmy.

"But you will tell us what—what Miss Veronica said, won't you, Jemmy? We are all in sad trouble because we're afraid some harm has happened to her, and we want to find out where she is."

The sight of the sweet, pale face, down which the tears were now streaming fast, and the sound of the sweet, tremulous voice, instantly melted the boy's heart, and he professed his readiness to say all that he knew. But that amounted to very little. He had seen Miss Veronica at the school-house. But she had not remained until the end of the practising. Before leaving, she had said to Jemmy that she was going to Mrs. Plew's house to drink tea, and that, as the evening was turning out wet, she should sleep there. Jemmy was to go and take that message to the vicarage. But he was not to go until quite late; not until after seven o'clock at all events. And Miss Veronica had given him a silver sixpence, and bade him earn it honestly by doing exactly as she told him.

"And so I did," protested Jemmy. "I niver goe'd near the vicarage until nigh upon eight o'clock, and it was powering wi' rain, and I was soaked through, and when I got home, daddy thrashed me."

Old Joanna stood by, emphasising every word that the boy uttered, by a nod of the head, a sigh, or a gesture with uplifted hands; as who should say, "Aye, aye! It is just as I thought!" Ever since the speak-

ing of those words by Mr. Plew, which so aroused the vicar's indignation, the latter had sat passive—almost sullen—in his chair. He had listened to Jemmy Sack's story in silence, and had apparently relinquished his purpose of going forth to seek his daughter. Now he rose, as though struck by a sudden idea, and hastily left the room. His footsteps were heard ascending the staircase, and entering the apartment overhead. It was Veronica's chamber. The steps ceased, and there was silence in the house. The little group in the dining parlour stood staring blankly at each other.

Maud's tears had ceased to flow. She was frozen by a new, and but half-comprehended fear.

Presently Catherine ran in from the kitchen. People had come to give what information they could. By this time the whole village was acquainted with Veronica's disappearance. Roger the ploughman's wife had seen Miss Levincourt by herself, walking along the Shipley Magna road very fast. Miss had not said good afternoon to her. But she (Roger's wife) thought she might not have seen her, for she was going along in a quick, scared kind of a way, looking straight before her.

Immediately after this woman, appeared a witness who testified to having seen the vicar's daughter in a carriage, driving swiftly on the road between Shipley Magna and Danecester, between five and six o'clock on the previous evening.

This man was the Shipley-in-the-Wold and Danecester carrier, who knew Veronica well by sight, as he did most people within a circuit of twenty miles round Shipley. He had just heard, he said, down at the Red Cow, that the young lady was missing. So he thought he would step up and say when and where he had last seen her.

On hearing the first words of this man's story, Maud had rushed breathlessly upstairs to call her guardian. In a few minutes she returned alone to the door of the dining-room, and beckoned Mr. Plew to come to her.

The babble of voices, which had arisen high and confused when she had left the room, ceased suddenly as soon as her white face was seen again in the doorway. There was a pause of expectation.

"What is it?" whispered Mr. Plew, obeying Maud's summons.

"Will you please step into the study to Uncle Charles for a moment, Mr. Plew?"

She preceded him into the study. The

vicar was sitting there with a paper in his hand.

"Is there news?" cried Mr. Plew, eagerly.

The vicar's face showed a strange agitation: an agitation different from the first emotions of surprise and alarm which he had exhibited on learning that his daughter was not to be found.

"Yes," he said; "there is news. I am—happy—thankful—that Veronica is in safety. It has been a false alarm—a—a mistake. I am quite relieved."

"Thank God!" cried the surgeon, fervently.

Mr. Levincourt tried to speak with some degree of self-control. His hand shook, and his features twitched.

"I have cause to be thankful," he began, and then suddenly broke down and turned away. "Tell him what I wanted, Maud," he murmured in a stifled voice. Then he bent his arms on the table, and bowed his head, and hid his face in his hands.

"Will you do us the great kindness," said Maud, addressing the surgeon, "to get rid of all those people? Thank them, and say—what is fitting."

"But what am I to say?"

Maud glanced at the vicar, but seeing him motionless, with his face buried in his hands, she answered:

"Mr. Levincourt wishes them to be told that Veronica is in perfect safety. There is no cause for alarm. He has found a letter from her."

"Impress upon them," murmured the vicar, with still averted face, "that there has been a—misunderstanding. If I had seen the letter sooner—Miss Levincourt did not leave my house without informing me."

Mr. Plew, still hesitating, Maud made an imploring gesture.

"Pray, pray, Mr. Plew, send those people away!"

Mr. Plew proceeded to obey the vicar's directions as well as he could. The poor little man's heart was aching and his spirit was troubled. At length he succeeded in inducing the little crowd to depart. They went unwillingly and with a perfect hunger of unsatisfied curiosity. They would fain have lingered in the kitchen to talk and to hear, but old Joanna very unceremoniously bade them begone, and was obdurate towards all attempts at discussing the question of Miss Veronica's departure.

"I know no more than my betters chooses to tell me," said Joanna. "Thank

God the lass isn't murdered, nor any way hurt, nor yet drowned, nor yet kidnapped. That's all I know. And her father knows where she is. And so I don't see as the rest is any of our businesses."

"Mr. Plew," said the vicar, when the surgeon, having knocked at the door of the study, had been re-admitted by Maud: "Mr. Plew, if I showed undue resentment for what you said just now, I ask your pardon."

"Oh, Mr. Levincourt! Don't, pray don't speak of my pardon! But—Miss Desmond said you had found a letter——"

"I have found a letter from my daughter, and I am going to London to-night."

"To-night!"

"Yes."

"To meet Miss Levincourt?"

"To meet Miss Levincourt if possible. I take Maud with me. I may be absent some time, and she cannot remain here alone. I shall place her under the protection of her aunt, Lady Tallis, who is in London. If you are asked about Miss Desmond, I wish you to be able to say that *she*, at least, is in safety."

There was a bitterness in the vicar's tone as he spoke the last words, which sent a pang through the surgeon's heart. He was, as Joanna had called him, "a soft little man."

"I hope," said he, wistfully, "that I may be able to say so of *Ve*—of Miss Levincourt too."

"Mr. Plew, I believe you are a sincere friend, and that you wish well to us all," said the vicar, suddenly. "I will trust you."

"You may, Mr. Levincourt. I—of course I knew all along that it was of no use; and I never—scarcely ever—allowed myself to feel anything like hope. She was so superior in every way. But I am not altogether selfish. Veronica's happiness is very dear to me. It's all over now, of course. But if—if there is anything in the world I can do for you, or for her, you may be sure I shall not flinch."

The vicar took the little man's hand. "Ah!" he moaned, with the cruel candour of a man absorbed in his own trouble: "it might have been better if she had been able to bring herself to care for you. Anything would have been better than this! She has run away, Mr. Plew;—run away with that——" he checked himself, "with Sir John Gale."

"I knew it!" cried the surgeon. "I am not surprised." But his face grew deadly pale as he spoke.

"Let it turn out as it may," resumed the vicar, "I cannot easily forgive her. She has been ungrateful and deceitful. But she is my child, my only child. I cannot abandon her to her fate. She writes me here, that Sir John had private reasons for making a secret marriage——"

"Marriage! Is she married?"

"If she is not, he shall answer it, the infernal villain! But," added the vicar, recovering himself somewhat, "you perceive how all-important it may be not to give evil tongues a handle. You will speak of—you will defend—a runaway match, nothing more. That is bad enough. I must go to London to-night. A train leaves Danecester at midnight. I might drive to a bye-station at once, but I should be no better off. We must wait for the twelve o'clock mail; there is no direct train to London between this hour and midnight. Every hour seems an age."

"Yes, yes; you must go. God grant you may find her! Have you any clue?"

"A few words dropped by that man's servant. And his own intention, expressed some time ago, of going to Italy. If I can but be in time to prevent their leaving England——"

"And Miss Desmond goes with you?"

"Yes. My poor Maudie! Ah, how little your mother thought to what contact with misery and disgrace she was exposing you when she bequeathed you to my care!"

They were the first words of consideration for any human being's suffering, save his own, that the vicar had spoken.

Arrangements were hastily made for the departure that evening. Mr. Plew was helpful and active. He ordered a vehicle to take the vicar and his ward to Danecester at seven o'clock. Old Joanna was to be in charge of the house. Catherine sobbed as she packed up a few clothes for Maud.

"Seems like as if a earthquake had comed and swallowed us all up, miss," said Catherine. The vicar had fought hard to show a brave front to the servants, to keep up appearances; but without much success; for there was no conviction at the bottom of his own heart to enable him to persuade others that all would be well with his daughter. He was too much a man of the world to give credence to the assertion made in the hurried letter left behind her by Veronica, that weighty private reasons had prevented Sir John Gale from openly demanding her hand, and had induced him to urge her to consent to a

clandestine marriage. "For a man of his age and position, there can exist no such reasons," muttered the vicar between his clenched teeth. "Miserable, wretched, misguided, degraded, girl! But if there is justice on earth he shall marry her. He shall find that he cannot thus outrage and defy the world. He shall marry her by——."

The dusk was falling when the vicar and his ward drove away from the garden gate of the vicarage. As they passed the spot where Sir John Gale had been found bleeding and insensible on the ground, Mr. Levincourt closed his eyes and groaned aloud.

Maud started, as the scene recalled to her mind the fact that the accident had happened little more than two months ago.

"Two months!" she said to herself, while the tears blinded her eyes and streamed down her cheeks. "How happy we were, only two months ago!"

THE HONEST MINER.

ONE autumn, a year or two ago, in pursuit of my travels, I struck into the wild mountain region of Southern Oregon, just north of the California boundary line. I had not gone far on the trail before I overtook a stalwart, grey-shirted, knee-booted individual. He had a pack of scarlet blankets strapped on his back, and as he trudged along, for want of better company, he held an animated conversation with himself: an oath being most innocently introduced every now and then, when the merits of the case seemed to call for it. He was an old gold-digger returning to his favourite "creek." He had been off, on one of the usual digger wild-goose chases, after some fancied El Dorado at a distance; but was returning, disappointed, to the place where he had mined for many a year. Every locality was familiar to him. As we walked together over the mountain, or by the banks of the creek or stream, down in the wooded valley, my companion would point out to me, with a half-regretful pride, the places where "big strikes" had been made in former times. Pointing to a ruined log cabin, out of the door of which a coyote wolf rushed, he assured me that the owner of that cabin had washed some forty thousand dollars out of a patch twenty or thirty yards in extent.

"Was he a white man?" I asked; for there are numbers of Chinese miners in that section of country.

"Wal," was the reply, "not muchly; he war a Dutchman."

In Pacific Coast parlance, it appeared a "white man" did not altogether refer to the colour of his face but to the quality of his soul, and meant a good fellow and a right sort of man; and that Dutchmen or Germans, and

the inhabitants of the north of Europe generally are not classed under that title. They are too saving, too steady, and possibly too clannish; for, though he does become an American citizen as soon as he arrives, this is with no view to any political principles he entertains, but solely to facilitate the pre-emption of land, the acquisition of a lager-beer brewery, or the opening of a corner grocery.

Cañon Creek, as the locality was named, had once, I was told, been a "bully old diggin'," but the stream having been pretty well washed out, the miners had decamped to parts unknown, leaving no address behind them. Like the Arabs, they folded their tents, and silently moved away. Here was a half-ruined building, choked up with weeds, bearing record that it had been once the El Dorado Saloon—in other words, a gambling hell, or worse—and around it were a few cabins. This had been the town site, and the projectors no doubt imagined that it was to be "the right smart chance of a city." However, fate had decided otherwise, and the only traces of former greatness to be seen, were piles of stones and gravel, and long trenches, and half-ruined ditches, which gave the spot the appearance of a place where some great engineering operations had been left half finished. Here and there, a solitary Chinese slunk about, intent on his own business, and, if my companion were to be believed, in pursuit of stray cats. As we turned a corner of the rough trail, we suddenly emerged in front of the store; by the door were sitting half a dozen of the old habitués of the creek, lazily talking. My friend was delighted.

"There they are!" he cried, "loafing about, chawin' baccy, jest as nat'ral as anythin'!"

He seemed to be a popular man among them. As his friend (friendships are quickly made in the West) I was received with vociferations of welcome, and the choice of half a dozen shanties to "spread a blanket in." In this way I saw a good deal of the honest miner of Cañon Creek, and learned not a little of his ways of life and thought, in this lonely little dell in the Californian mountains. Of course, we have all read about the miner in California, British Columbia, or Australia: about his extravagance, his boisterousness, and his conduct generally; and we are all too apt to think of him only as the roystering blade in the palmy days of 1849 or 1853, when gold could be had for the picking up. The typical miner in 1869 is a very different man from that of 1849, even though he be the same individual. No longer do you, as a rule, see the many fine-looking handsome fellows of the early days of California, fifteen or twenty years ago. They were all young then, but hardship has told upon them; for, in many cases they have pursued, with varying luck, that business of gold-digging ever since. The 'forty-niners are the "blue blood" of the coast, but they are proverbially poor. Accordingly, these men, among whom I associated on Cañon Creek, were very different from our usual notion of the gold-

miner, but were yet at the same time very characteristic types of what is well known on the Rocky Mountain slopes as the "honest miner." He is a peculiar individual, and differs in many respects from the settler of late years. Enter his cabin, and there is always indubitable evidence of a miserable life of single blessedness. The gold-digger is almost universally unmarried. The rough blanket-spread cot; the axe-hewn table, with its scanty array of crockery; the old battered stove, or fire-place built of clay and stones; the inevitable sack of flour, half sack of potatoes and junk of pork; the old clothes and old boots, and a few books and newspapers; go far in making out the extent of the miner's worldly possessions. A little patch of cultivated ground enclosed by old "sluice-box" lumber, is sometimes an accompaniment, as well as a dog, a cat, or a few fowls. The inhabitant of this cabin is often rough, grey, and grizzly. He came out twenty years ago, and his residence has, with few exceptions, always been on the gulch where we now find him. Probably it rejoices in the euphonious name of Horse-beef Bar, Bull Dog Point, Jackass Gulch, or Ground Hogs Glory; by these names it may or may not be found on the surveyor-general's map, but at all events it goes by no other. He "does his trading," at a store at Diggerburgh. Credit he calls "jaw-bone," and talks about "running his face" for "grub," but sometimes this is objected to by the storekeeper, as the gulch is not "paying" well, and behind the counter you may see a mule's "jaw-bone" significantly suspended, and below the words "played out!" Here, the honest miner purchases a few pounds of flour, a little tea, coffee, and brown sugar, and as much as he can buy of whisky.

He can tell where all the rich spots have been in the rivers, bars, gulches, and flats; but that was in the glorious, wicked, cutting, shouting, fortune-making, times of yore. He can't tell where there are any rich spots now. He is certain there is a rich quartz ledge in the mountain yonder, and, if he could get water on the flat, he is sure it would pay good wages. Excess of fortune spoiled him in 'forty-nine. Economy is a myth with him, and he cheerfully entertains half a dozen friends, though his magazine of provisions, as well as of money, be in an advanced state of exhaustion. His supper cooked, he thinks of home—that is, the home of twenty years ago. In reality he has no home. Mentally, he sees the faces of his youth, fresh and blooming; but they are getting old and withered now. He sees the peach orchard and the farm-house, from which he wandered, a young rover, when first the news of golden California burst upon the astonished ears of the world. That home is now in the hands of strangers. Were he to "go East," as he calls it, he would find himself a stranger in a strange land. He thinks he'll go back "some time or other." Fortune occasionally favours him a trifle more than usual; and then he may make a trip to "the Bay," as he calls San

Francisco. He stops at the "What Cheer House." He may be seen there by hundreds. Poor fellow! He came here to enjoy himself, but he doesn't well know how. The novelty of the city wears off in a day or two. Without occupation, his routine of life broken, he becomes a victim to a disease for which the French could alone have invented a name—ennui. At night he can go to the theatre; but by day he sits in rows in the hall of the hotel, crowds the entrance, and sometimes blocks up the street. If he have money enough, and be so inclined, he may "go on the spludge," and possibly get drunk; but that with this class of miner is not very likely. His face wears an expression of wild bewilderment and intense weariness. Unaccustomed to the hurry and bustle of the city, he collides frequently with the denizens of the metropolis. The spruce, fashionably-dressed, frizzle-headed clerks, who flit by, excite in him feelings of contempt and indignation. The swarms of youthful females in the streets astonish, delight, and tantalise him. It is something so new to him. There are few on Jackass Gulch, and they would be better away. When he knew "Frisco," it was not much more than a collection of cotton tents on some sand-hills. Now, it is a fine city of one hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants. Females were almost unknown, and the announcement by a steamboat proprietor of "four lady passengers to-night" was quite enough to ensure a crowded patronage for his vessel. But the digger of the auriferous soil often leaves the city with the knowledge that the world has gone far ahead of him during his lonely residence in the mountains. He had far better not have come. In Diggerburgh he is somebody. In San Francisco he is lost among the crowd, or at best is only a "rusty old miner;" those who thus contemptuously talk of him, forgetting that he and such as he were the founders, and are yet, to a great extent, the stronghold, of California.

I fancy I do not really wrong the honest miner in saying he does not possess much religion. Yet, if a clergyman by any chance come into his camp, he makes a point of attending "meeting," on much the same principle, and with feelings of about equal reverence, with which he would go to a dog-fight or a tight-rope performance: because he looks upon it as the right thing to *patronise* the affair. If the parson look on as he is washing for gold, he will ask him if he would like to "wash out a pan," and as this invitation is usually accepted, the worthy fellow will contrive to slip in among the gravel, a tolerable nugget, so that the washer may be nothing the worse for his clerical visit: custom in such cases providing that the contents of the pan go to the visitor. At one time there was a "revival of religion" among the miners. Never was there such a demand for tracts. Indeed, so great was the demand, that a special appeal had to be issued by a certain religious body, whose mission it was to look after such matters, for increased contributions to the

"dear gold-diggers' tract fund." To use the words of the "appeal," "the cry comes o'er the western wave, *more tracts*, MORE TRACTS!" At last the painful truth oozed out (though I hardly think it was related at the May meetings) *that the miners used the tracts to paper their log shanties!* A friend of mine, whose lot it was to officiate as a clergyman among them at one time, used often to tell me that he had to ring a bell in the morning, all through the apology for a street, inviting his parishioners to divine worship; and that, finding nobody in church when he came in, he first looked into one gambling saloon or tavern, and then into another, inviting those assembled there to come to church. "All right, parson," would be the good-natured reply; "we'll be there as soon as we've played out this hand for the whiskies. Jest be goen' ahead with the prayers and things, and we'll be along for the preachin'!"

This taking of "drinks" is characteristic of the miner. No bargain can be made, or any other matter of business or sociality settled, without the indispensable drinks. The same clerical friend, whose experience I have just related, was shocked on his first arrival among the miners at being asked to "stand drinks," after he had received a very liberal subscription towards the building of his church. Two mining companies that I know something about, threw dice to determine which of them should treat the "whole creek" to champagne, and as that wine was sold at fifteen dollars per bottle, the cost to the loser may be guessed. In most mining localities it is looked upon as a cause of mortal offence, to decline drinking with the first fellow who shouts, "Let's put in a blast, colonel!" In some places it is quite a serious breach of etiquette not to ask all who are sitting round in the bar-room of a tavern, though total strangers, to "Step up and take a drink." Sometimes they do not require any invitation. A friend of mine having had a long ride one day, dismounted at a tavern to take, *more Americano*, some refreshment, when, to his utter astonishment, fourteen men who were sitting around stepped up, and "lowed they would take sugar in thar'n." He paid for the fifteen "drinks," as it was in strict accordance with the custom of the country; but he took care not to go back to that hostelry again.

The Australian gold-digger is in many respects different from the Californian, but still he evinces the same carelessness of money. It used to be the custom for these men to come down to some village after they had made a slight "pile," go each to his favourite public-house, and give the money into the landlord's hands, with the information that he "shouted" (or asked all and sundry to drink) until it was finished. Then the landlord at intervals would say, "Step up, boys, it's Jim Jenkins's shout!" Then they all wished Jim luck, until Jim's shout was out, and then he went back to his gully, proud that he had "spent his money like a man." On one occasion a miner came down and handed his money over to the landlord; but, contrary

to expectation, nobody would respond to his shout. He had been a convict, and "lagged" for some grievous offence. The man was at his wit's end. At last he struck upon the brilliant expedient of engaging an idler at labourer's daily wages—eight shillings—to *drink with him*. And so he got through his holiday!

No one can tell where a rich mine will be discovered, or where it will not. Even quartz mines, which require skill to diagnose, have been equally discovered by chance. A robber fired at a man standing with his back to a rock, but missed; as the ball splintered the moss-grown quartz, the miner who was attacked saw specks of gold sparkle in the moonlight. It afterwards proved one of the richest mines in California. Two miners about to leave the country, just to celebrate the event, got "on the spludge" the night before their intended departure. As they were coming home to their cabins, in mere foolishness they commenced rolling stones down a slope. One of these struck off the point of a rock: which, on being examined, was found rich with specks of gold. This changed their plans, and they stayed, and stayed to some purpose, for they afterwards became very wealthy men.

The honest miner is far from being what may be called a "domestic character." If he were making five dollars per diem to "the hand" at "Greaser's Camp," and heard that somebody was making six at "Hellgate Cañon," in "Mountain Goat Gulch," the chances are that he would presently disappear to the new El Dorado. Now, Gold Bluff was the point to which all were rushing; that failed, but it didn't dishearten the men. They next rushed in thousands to Gold Lake; and then the cry was Fraser River; which disappointed so many thousands, that eventually it became a matter of as serious personal offence to ask a gentleman if he had been to Fraser River, as to tell him to "Go to Jericho." In 1863, the infuriated miner was blocking all the mountain trails and Washoe was the cry. In 1864, it was Black-foot. In 1866, I saw hundreds rushing through slush and snow for Big Bend, in the heart of the Rocky Mountains, declaring that "Cariboo wasn't a patch on it," and that at all events they would "see the elephant." It is curious that men who have been on the Pacific coast since the commencement of gold mining, who have knocked about the Rocky Mountain slopes, and have been the victims of a dozen disappointments, should be so easily tempted again to risk fortune; but it is so, and the country would never have been what it is, if they had all been as sensible as they might have been. This vagabond propensity will fasten on a man who allows himself to sit in front of a frying pan and a bundle of blankets on the ridge pole of a sore-backed horse, and I verily believe there are many men who, if their history were known, have travelled more and endured greater hardship in this way than many whose names are famous in the annals of travel, and whom the Geographical Society *delights to honour*. The true seeker after

El Dorado does not stop at distance or difficulties.

The Pacific-coast gold-miner does not care to be called like the Australian, a "digger:" the term in the former region being applied to and associated with, a miserable race of Indians who inhabit the mountains. He likes to be called by the title I have put at the head of this paper, "The Honest Miner." That he is honest enough, as honesty goes in America, nobody will deny to the profession as a whole, but still there is occasionally the dishonest miner. We do not speak of the rascal who is caught stealing gold out of the "sluice-box," and gets lynched for his pains; but of the equally rascally individual who "salts" a claim before selling it. That is, he scatters a few pieces through the gravel before the buyer comes to test it. In California some of the claims are wrought summer and winter; indeed the winter is more favourable than the summer, because water is more plentiful; but in British Columbia and in the Rocky Mountains, the frost causes working to be suspended. Then the claims are "laid over" and the great body of the miners come down to Victoria and other towns to pass the winter months, and to spend the money they have made during the summer. They also try to dispose of rather doubtful claims at this time, and one of the means adopted is to report having "struck a good prospect" just before leaving. It is remarkable, to say the least of it, how many good prospects are "struck" in this way. The endless swindles connected with quartz companies are, I dare say, vividly enough in the memory of certain gentlemen in the City of London and elsewhere, whose purses were longer than their foresight.

Gold mining will always be a staple industry of the Rocky Mountain slope, and the increased immigration and attention excited by the Pacific Railroad will greatly increase the business; but the old miner will be "killed off." Large companies will work his "claims," and shoals of new hands will crowd his solitary valleys—men who know not the old traditions and have no sympathy with the old manners. He himself will meet them half-way, and will unconsciously lose many of his characteristics and peculiarities. He will get toned down to the duller routine of other workmen, as his pursuit takes its place among the "industries."

THE DEATH OF TH' OWD SQUIRE.

'Twas a wild, mad kind of night, as black as the bottomless pit,
The wind was howling away, like a Bedlamite in a fit,
Tearing the ash-boughs off, and mowing the poplars down,
In the meadows beyond the old flour-mill, where you turn off to the town.

And the rain (well, it *did* rain) dashing the window glass,
And deluging on the roof, as the Devil were come to pass;
The gutters were running in floods outside the stable-door.
And the spouts splashed from the tiles, as if they would never give o'er.

Loe' how the winders rattled! you'd almost ha thought that thieves
Were wrenching at the shutters, while a ceaseless pelt of leaves
Flew at the door in gusts; and I could hear the beck
Calling so loud I knew at once it was up to a tall man's neck.

We was huddling in the harness-room, by a little scrap of fire,
And Tom, the coachman he was there, a practising for the choir;
But it sounded dismal, anthem did, for squire was dying fast,
And the doctor'd said, do what he would, "Squire's breaking up at last."

The Death watch, sure enough, ticked loud just over th' owd mare's head,
Though he had never once been heard up there since master's boy lay dead;
And the only sound, besides Tom's toon, was the stirring in the stalls,
And the gnawing and the scratching of the rats in the owd walls.

We couldn't hear Death's foot pass by, but we knew that he was near;
And the chill rain, and the wind and cold made us all shake with fear;
We listened to the clock upstairs, 'twas breathing soft and low,
For the nurse said at the turn of night the old squire's soul would go.

Master had been a wildish man, and led a roughish life;
Didn't he shoot the Bowton squire, who dared write to his wife?
He beat the Rads at Hindon town, I heard, in 'twenty-nine,
When every pail in market place was brimmed with red port wine.

And as for hunting, bless your soul, why for forty year or more
He'd kept the Marley hounds, man, as his fayther did afore;
And now to die, and in his bed—the season just begun—
It made him fret, the doctor said, as 't might do any-one.

And when the young sharp lawyer came to see him sign his will,
Squire made me blow my horn outside as we were going to kill;
And we turned the hounds out in the court—that seemed to do him good;
For he swore, and sent us off to seek a fox in Thornhill wood.

But then the fever it rose high, and he would go see the room
Where missus died ten years ago when Lammastide shall come:
I mind the year, because our mare at Salisbury broke down;
Moreover the town hall was burnt at Steeple Dinton town.

It might be two, or half past two, the wind seemed quite asleep;
Tom, he was off, but I awake, sat watch and ward to keep;
The moon was up, quite glorious like, the rain no longer fell,
When all at once out clashed and clanged the rusty turret ball.

That hadn't been heard for twenty year, not since the Luddite days,
Tom he leaped up, and I leaped up, for all the house ablaze
Had sure not scared us half as much, and out we ran like mad;
I, Tom, and Joe, the whipper in, and t' little stable lad.

"He's killed himself," that's the idea that came into my head;
I felt as sure as though I saw Squire Barrowby was dead;
When all at once a door flew back, and he met us face to face;
His scarlet coat was on his back, and he looked like the old race.

The nurse was clinging to his knees, and crying like a child;
The maids were sobbing on the stairs, for he looked fierce and wild:
"Saddle me Lightning Bess, my man," that's what he said to me;
"The moon is up, we're sure to find at Stop or Eterby."

"Get out the dogs; I'm well to-night, and young again and sound;
I'll have a run once more before they put me underground;
They brought my father home feet first, and it never shall be said
That his son Joe, who, rode so straight, died quietly in his bed.

Brandy!" he cried; "a tumbler full, you women howling there;"
Then clapped the old black velvet cap upon his long grey hair,
Thrust on his boots, snatched down his whip; though he was old and weak,
There was a devil in his eye, that would not let me speak.

We loosed the dogs to humour him, and sounded on the horn;
The moon was up above the woods, just east of Haggard Bourne;
I buckled Lightning's throat lash fast; the squire was watching me;
He let the stirrups down himself, so quick, yet carefully.

Then up he got and spurred the mare, and, ere I well could mount,
He drove the yard gate open, man, and called to old Dick Blount,
Our huntaman, dead five years ago—for the fever rose again,
And was spreading, like a flood of flame, fast up into his brain.

Then off he flew before the dogs, yelling to call us on,
While we stood there, all pale and dumb, scarce knowing he was gone;
We mounted, and below the hill we saw the fox break out,
And down the covert ride we heard the old squire's parting shout.

And in the moonlit meadow mist we saw him fly the rail
Beyond the hurdles by the beck, just half way down the vale;
I saw him breast fence after fence—nothing could turn him back;
And in the moonlight after him streamed out the brave old pack.

'Twas like a dream, Tom cried to me, as we rode free and fast;
Hoping to turn him at the brook, that could not well be past,
For it was swollen with the rain; but, Lord, 'twas not to be;
Nothing could stop old Lightning Bess but the broad breast of the sea.

The hounds swept on, and well in front the mare had got her stride;
She broke across the fallow land that runs by the down side;

We pulled up on Chalk Linton Hill, and as we stood us there,
Two fields beyond we saw the squire fall stone dead
from the mare.

Then she swept on, and, in full cry, the hounds went
out of sight;

A cloud came over the broad moon, and something
dimmed our sight,

As Tom and I bore master home, both speaking under
breath;

And that's the way I saw th' owd squire ride boldly to
his death.

HINDOO CIVIL SERVANTS.

A MISTAKE has been made lately by the Civil Service Commissioners which is not the less grave for being the mistake of able men, who, on the whole, discharge arduous duties very efficiently. The mistake is that the commissioners have sacrificed to an official crotchet, two out of four Hindoo candidates who, at the recent open competition for the Civil Service of India, earned fairly their right to serve the Queen. Two of these four Hindoos, who won good places among the selected fifty out of three hundred and twenty-three candidates for public office in India, were civilly strangled before the altar of the said crotchet; and a third, upon the same grounds, was scarified with a reservation that might set a lasting mark upon his character. Before we tell how this was done, let us show what is meant by open competition for the Civil Service of India.

Before the year eighteen 'thirty-four no native of India could hold, under the British government of India, any high employment in the public service. But in that year an Act was passed ordaining "that no native of British India, or natural-born subject of His Majesty, should by reason of his religion, place of birth, descent or colour, be disabled from holding any place, office or employment under the said company." And when all imperial rights of the East India Company were resumed by the Crown, it was emphatically declared to be Her Majesty's will "that so far as may be, our subjects of whatever creed or race be fairly and impartially admitted to offices in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability, and integrity duly to discharge." We come now to the means taken for testing these qualifications.

Before the year eighteen hundred and fifty-three, offices in India were obtained by private interest with the East India Directors. But the old system was succeeded in that year by the annual distribu-

tion of appointments in the Indian Civil Service among the best men in open competitive examination. The scheme of the examinations was devised by a committee which had Lord Macaulay for its chairman. The plan of this committee was meant to ensure the fair testing, not of one particular form, but of any form, of good education. It assigned to each of twelve branches of knowledge, a certain number of marks, and allowed candidates to offer themselves for examination in as many or as few of the twelve as they pleased. It did not enforce knowledge of Latin and Greek. A youth trained upon Latin, Greek, and Mathematics, might get to the head of the list with knowledge of that sort; but another might get to the head of the list with scarcely any knowledge of Mathematics, little Latin, and no Greek, by passing a good examination, say, in English, French, Italian, German, Geology, and Chemistry. In the scale of marks no value was given to the vernacular languages of India, which were to be studied at a later stage; but there was recognition of the two great classical languages of the East, Sanskrit and Arabic. "These two languages," said the report of the committee, "are already studied by a few young men at the great English seats of learning. They can be learned as well here as in the East; and they are not likely to be studied in the East unless some attention has been paid to them here." To the native of India they are very much what Latin and Greek are to the Englishman. In the year 'fifty-three, the Indian Universities were not established; and there was practically no expectation of a native candidate from India. But, for the recognition of Sanskrit and Arabic studies in England, there were allowed to each of those subjects three hundred and seventy-five marks in a scale which gave seven hundred and fifty to Greek or Latin. The examinations thus established were conducted by the India Board till the year 'fifty-eight, when the control of them was made over by Lord Ellenborough to the Civil Service Commissioners. In the preceding year, during the mutiny, the University of Calcutta had been established.

The Universities of Bombay and Calcutta belong to a plan devised by the East India Company before its extinction by the Sepoy Mutiny of eighteen 'fifty-seven. A despatch of the Court of Directors, prepared in the year 'fifty-four under the direction of Sir Charles Wood, laid down a

plan for the spread of education in India, which left no form of it untouched, from university and college training to village schools. Universities were planned upon the model of the University of London; with due allowance for the different conditions and requirements of the students. Professorships of science were established, with special recognition of proficiency in the vernacular languages, as well as in Sanskrit, Arabic, and Persian. Schools for the education of the natives throughout India were encouraged by grants in aid, without distinction of creed. At Calcutta, besides an excellent Medical College, there is the Hindoo College, founded by Ramuham Roy and Mr. David Hare: which, on the establishment of the university, was split into a Hindoo school and a college known as Presidency College. There is Doveton College, originating in a school founded by Anglo-Indians for the education of their children, to which a college was added after the munificent bequest to it, about twelve years ago, of twenty thousand pounds from Major Doveton. There is a Mahometan College founded by Warren Hastings, for the study of oriental literature, to which a general department was added, upon the foundation of the university; also a Sanskrit College founded by Horace Hayman Wilson, which has been extended in like manner. Besides these, Calcutta has a Free Church College founded by the liberal and able Scotch missionary, Dr. Alexander Duff; a Cathedral Mission College; and a General Assembly Institution, to which a college department has been lately added. At Bombay, where the university began to grant degrees in the year 'sixty-two, there is the Elphinstone Institution, originating in a subscription to do honour to Mr. Elphinstone, at the close of his government, in 'twenty-six. There is also a Grant College, founded in memory of Sir Robert Grant, after his death in 'thirty-seven. It is a well-appointed medical school, recognised by our Royal College of Surgeons, and has near it a hospital founded by the munificent gift of Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy, whose benefactions to Bombay during twenty years amounted to two hundred thousand pounds. Among other examples of the liberal aid given by native gentlemen to the advance of education, is the founding of a travelling fellowship for Hindoos in the Bombay University, by Mr. Premchund Roychund, who has also endowed a Professorship of Economic Science, and provided funds for

building the Civil Engineering College at Poona.

It may be noted, that under the Indian Council Act—a supplement to the legislation of 'fifty-eight for the better government of India, which became law in 'sixty-one—natives of high mark have been invited to take part in the deliberations of the Viceroy's Council. The bench and the bar of India have been open to natives since the establishment of the High Court at Calcutta and the introduction of the circuit system; measures which had an earnest and accomplished advocate in Mr. Henry Sumner Maine. In this Court, for the first time, natives might be admitted to the bench, judge causes of Europeans, both in civil and criminal cases, and be paid as well as their English brother judges. Of the Hindoos who came to London, several have entered as students of the Inns of Court without offering themselves for the Civil Service; and to some of those who offer for the Civil Service, eating terms and law studies have supplied a second chance of a career. For the Covenanted Civil Service has been nominally open, practically closed; and too many of the lower class Eurasians, instead of supporting the liberal policy adopted by their country, desire nothing better than a happy maintenance of the old, exclusive state of things.

One of the first acts of the Civil Service Commissioners in connexion with the open examinations for the Civil Service of India, when they passed under their control, was to raise from three hundred and seventy-five to five hundred, the number of marks assigned for the Sanskrit or Arabic languages and literature. The reason given for the change was, that "without departing from the principle of not requiring in the first examination acquaintance with special branches of knowledge, the commissioners consider that such knowledge, when it is admitted, should be adequately rewarded." The two Civil Service Commissioners of that year, 'fifty-eight—one of whom, Sir John Shaw Lefevre, had been a member of the original committee which settled the plan of competition for the Indian Civil Service—recognised at once and generously, the probable effect of the establishment of the Calcutta University. "Although," they said in their report, "this important institution is too recent to have produced any results, yet, looking to the curricula which have been established, the curricula for its degrees, to the exa-

mination papers which have been set, and to the numerous native students which it has already attracted, we cannot doubt that it will afford sufficient opportunities of a sound education to enable those who receive it to compete successfully with the young men of this country in the examinations for the Civil Service of India." In the same report it was said: "They will undoubtedly be at some disadvantage as compared with natives of the United Kingdom in respect of the ordinary subjects of classical education; but this will be, in part, compensated by the greater facilities they possess as regards Sanskrit and Arabic."

In the following year, there was the first arrival from India. A Parsee came over to compete: the limit of age for competitors being then twenty-three, and he in his twenty-third year. While he was working in London for examination, the limit of age was reduced to twenty-two, and he became disqualified. It was not until the year eighteen hundred and sixty-three that the first of the expected Hindoo candidates appeared in the examination-room, in the persons of Mr. Satyendra Nath Tagore and Mr. Manomohan Ghose. In that year there were a hundred and eighty-nine competitors. Mr. Tagore offered himself for examination in six subjects—English literature and history, English composition, French, moral science, Sanskrit and Arabic—got the highest marks of his year in Sanskrit and Arabic, passed a fair examination in his four other subjects, and came out forty-third of the selected fifty. The place of the other Hindoo candidate was outside the border line of the selected. Mr. Tagore was thus the first, and for the next six years—in fact, until last June—he was the only native Indian who won his way into the Indian Civil Service by success in open competition. He won it in June, 'sixty-three, and he did so because he could add to a competent knowledge of four other subjects, a very good knowledge of Sanskrit and Arabic. In October of the same year, the number of marks obtainable by Sanskrit was reduced from five hundred to three hundred and seventy-five!

In eighteen 'sixty-four there was a general raising of the required minimum of knowledge.

Mr. Ghose tried again once or twice and failed, and then in 'sixty-five, the limit of age was again reduced by a year, and became—as it now is—twenty-one. This, of

course, put another difficulty in the way of native Indian candidates; who have special difficulties to overcome, in conquest of domestic prejudices, before they can, at great cost to themselves or their families, come four thousand miles to the place of examination, and there compete in a foreign language with men born to it. No wonder that a native Indian paper wrote, in January, 'sixty-six: "The impression is gaining ground amongst the people of India that the Civil Service examination is a delusion; that the Queen's proclamation is destined to remain a dead letter; and that it is useless to send to England Indian youths at enormous expense and trouble, for the chances of their success are remote."

No more Indian candidates appeared. Mr. Tagore was still the only Hindoo who had passed.

This was the state of affairs when there appeared, a few weeks ago, the list of fifty candidates selected from among three hundred and twenty-three for the Indian Civil Service, in the open competition of June, eighteen 'sixty-nine. There appeared in it not merely the name of, at last, another Hindoo, but the names of four Hindoos, who, moreover, all stood in good places among the fifty, and one of whom had the distinguished position of third in the list. It fortunately happens that this gentleman, Mr. Romesh Chunder Dutt, is not open to the technical objection brought against the other three, and adopted, by misjudgment of the commissioners, for the discrediting of one and the exclusion of two from the places they so hardly and well earned.

Of the four Hindoos who took rank among the selected candidates at the last open competition for the Indian Civil Service, three are from Calcutta, one is from Bombay. The three from Calcutta are Messrs. Dutt, Gupta, and Banerjee: who passed third, fourteenth, and thirty-eighth in the list of the selected fifty. The one from Bombay, is Mr. Thakur, who passed thirty-ninth. Messrs. Dutt and Gupta, before they came to England, had been studying for three years at Presidency College, and had passed their first examination in arts at the Calcutta University. Mr. Banerjee had studied for four years at Doveton College, and was B.A. of the Calcutta University. These gentlemen reached England in April, 'sixty-eight, entered themselves at once to classes in University College, London, and worked hard during vacation with those professors and teachers who had time to spare for them. Wherever

they became known, they made friends. They came to this country well educated, were liberal of mind, most friendly to England, amiable, upright, and indefatigably hard-working men, in character and general attainment answering to the best class of English students. They worked steadily for at least twelve, usually fourteen, fifteen, sixteen hours a day, as men well might who had staked so much as they were staking on success in the required examination. It was against their coming that they must break caste, oppose religious prejudices of their friends, cut themselves off in many things from their own people, travel four thousand miles, and maintain themselves alone in a strange country, for the chance—which experience declared to be a bad chance—of beating two or three hundred Englishmen on their own ground in their own subjects of study.

Mr. Thakur, who is of a high caste Brahmin family, came from Bombay, where, after education at Elphinstone College, he had taken the degree of B.A. in his university. He arrived in England only about five months before the examination, and did not connect himself with any English college. We have heard less of his story than of the others, and only assume its general resemblance to that of the three Hindoos from Calcutta.

All those gentlemen had fulfilled every requirement of the law. Each had deposited exact evidence of his age with the commissioners, passed his examination, received formal notification of the place obtained among selected candidates, and seen it announced in the newspapers, when the difficulty was first raised which disturbed the official judgment. Justice was then tied hand and foot, and lies now in some danger of being strangled with red tape. One evening during their period of study in London, these Hindoos, being in friendly talk with fellow-countrymen (one of whom, settled in London as a teacher of his language to selected candidates, we will call Mr. Blank), were discussing what chance any of them had of offering himself for a second examination if he were rejected at the first. But, said Mr. Blank to two of them, you were entered as sixteen when you matriculated at Calcutta, and by that reckoning you would already be over twenty-one.

Now the university of Calcutta requires that a student upon matriculating should have, "to the best of his belief, attained the age of sixteen years." The university of Bombay requires that he shall have

"completed his sixteenth year." The university of Madras sets no limit of age; and at the two other universities there is good evidence to show that there has been much looseness of practice in registering the age of students at their entrance. It is the known and legal custom of a Hindoo to reckon age by the true year of his life, or that which he will complete on his next birthday. This custom is accepted in the Indian law courts; it was fully argued and admitted, years ago, in the case of a conversion of a Hindoo boy by a missionary; and the best evidence of its common acceptance is the rule that a Hindoo is of age when sixteen: which, in the chief text book of native law, Macnaghten's Principles, is rightly laid down as meaning that, "according to the doctrine of Bengal, the end of fifteen years is the limit of minority." This is, indeed, a custom beyond question. Mr. Chisholm Anstey, who has been a judge in the Bombay High Court, adds to a statement of it, that, "according to his judgment and belief, no native of British India, upon whom the condition of attaining a certain age is imposed by law would, unless the sense thereof were previously explained to him, understand it to be a condition of having completed such age." The reader will observe that we are now coming to the mistake made by the commissioners. Misled by a reference to the Indian University Calendars, they assumed against two of these Hindoos that their age exceeded twenty-one on the first of March last. Take one as an example. Mr. Banerjee duly deposited with the commissioners, before his examination, the required evidence of the exact date of his birth: which was the tenth of November, eighteen 'forty-eight. This evidence having been accepted as sufficient, he was duly admitted to examination, and in every respect had fulfilled his part in the conditional contract by which he was tempted to leave home four thousand miles behind him. After this, in fact, the commissioners had nothing to do with the books of the Calcutta University. But grant that they had, the source of the misunderstanding was most clear. That any question could arise out of it, did not occur to the young Hindoos until they heard it first raised by their countryman, Mr. Blank, who had been for some time in England. They proposed at once to take steps to avoid future misunderstanding. But Mr. Blank, as they afterwards explained to the commissioners, and had witnesses to prove, "told us very emphatically that it would be

absurd to do so, as it would be suggesting difficulties where none existed, and that if any one had his attention drawn to the matter it was easy enough to explain it." After his countrymen had passed, Mr. Blank, for reasons best known to himself, informed against them. When called upon to explain, they did explain. But the decision of the commissioners is told in these sentences from their subsequent petition for its reconsideration, showing "that they forwarded to the commissioners the explanations asked of them, and offered to procure from India further corroboration of the fact that they had in respect of age at the time of examination strictly and faithfully fulfilled the conditions required of candidates in the open competition for the Civil Service of India. That four days after their explanation had been forwarded they received letters from the secretary to the commission, informing them that the Civil Service Commissioners had carefully considered their reply, and that they removed their names from the list of selected candidates because they regarded the statement of age made by them on matriculation as 'formal and authentic evidence.' Therefore they did not so regard the affidavits sworn by the fathers of their petitioners, supported in the case of one of them by the certificate of the Honourable Dwarkanath Mitter, a judge of the High Court of Calcutta, and in the case of the other by the original of his horoscope, with his father's solemn affirmation of its genuineness."

They argued modestly in their memorial that the exact and legal evidence as to their age was not rebutted by the entries made at their matriculation in the Universities of Calcutta and Bombay, because those entries included no sworn evidence; were never designed as exact evidence of age; and, moreover, according to the custom among Hindoos, and, in the case of the Calcutta University, according to the ordinary meaning of words in the English language, they were, and are, true, and also not inconsistent with the declarations of age made before the commissioners in the more precise form then required.

Mr. Banerjee matriculated in the University of Calcutta in December, 1863. Upon matriculation he was asked his age by the Principal of the Doveton College, who was filling up a form of particulars. He replied, "Sixteen," following the universal custom of his country. He had never read, or been required to read, the *Calendar* of the University, or seen any

part of it in print or in writing. No part of it was read or explained to him at the time when he stated his age, nor was any intimation given to him, that by stating his age to be sixteen he would be understood to say that he had completed his sixteenth year. Again, this statement of age at matriculation was made by himself only, and no corroborative document was required of, or put in by, any relative or friend on his behalf; and upon this statement of his own was founded a certificate by the Principal of Doveton College, to the effect that Surendra Nath Banerjee had, "to the best of his belief, attained the age of sixteen years." The certificate was probably signed with a mistaken belief that the boy had completed the age of sixteen, Doveton College being attended chiefly by students who are not Hindoos. But according to the custom of his country, and according also to what happened to be the meaning of the words of the certificate, he answered truly, although he had only attained or entered upon it. For the word "attained" is defined in Johnson's Dictionary to mean, in the only connexion in which it could be applied to a period of time, "to come up to, to enter upon;" meaning, according to its etymology, to touch upon, and even, as Professor Key has shown in a page of a volume of philological essays published last year, "only just to touch upon." Therefore, neither technically nor equitably, was there at that time supplied to the Civil Service Commissioners "the formal and authentic evidence" that Mr. Banerjee had, in December, 1863, completed his sixteenth year, which is held to supersede the precise and legally attested evidence which had been laid before the commissioners in due and exact accord with their requirements.

The case is one that should not have needed argument. The commissioners made short work of it by determining that they would not hear argument. They would accept nothing but a boy's loose statement of age, not made to them, made without caution, and in accordance with the custom of his country; to this they would give a false interpretation, and this, so interpreted—this evidence not properly before them—they would affirm to be "formal and authentic evidence." In favour of this, they resolved to exclude all the exact evidence of horoscope (which is, for an Indian, legally equivalent to our certificate of birth), and sworn testimony which had been produced before them, and accepted

by them, and which the victims of their mistake declared that they were able to corroborate by further testimony. One of the two gentlemen rejected, Mr. Thakur, would have been under the required limit of age by either reckoning; either by the books of his university or by the more exact evidence deposited with the commissioners. But by assuming the year of his birth from one statement and the month from another, he could be excluded. That was done, and he also was rejected. One of the three gentlemen whose evidence of age was questioned would have been still under twenty-one by any way of calculation. To him, therefore, the secretary to the commissioners wrote: "The discrepancy is important as affecting your character, it being obvious that a motive for understating your age on the later of the two occasions may have existed in the wish to be able to compete again in 1870, if unsuccessful in 1869. Having carefully considered all the circumstances of the case, the commissioners now desire to acquaint you that they do not think there is sufficient ground for regarding you as disqualified in respect of character for the Civil Service of India, and that your name will therefore remain on the list of selected candidates."

One need not say how this ungracious acceptance was felt by a young man who is not only high-minded and accomplished, but modest and keenly sensitive. One thing, however, is clear from it. The monstrous blunder of the commissioners is not only conspicuous for size, but is also well defined. The native candidates who are deprived, for the present, of the prize they have honestly won, are not excluded on the ground of character. The case is limited to the simple question of fact: How old are they? Nobody, we believe, doubts that the true date of birth was given to the commissioners, and that the apparent error is accounted for by the loose usage, on a point in itself not so material as to induce much strictness, at the Indian universities. There are several gentlemen now in England who have been connected with the Indian universities: two of them, indeed, as registrars. But their evidence as to that looseness of usage was offered in vain to the commissioners. The commissioners had spoken, and the commissioners are supreme. To be sure they had not spoken wisely, but what will supremacy come to next, if it begin by coming to confession? Their mistake is manifest to every one outside their office; to members

of the Indian government; to old Indian authorities; and to the judges of the Court of Queen's Bench. No matter. The commissioners are almost irresponsible. They are beyond the reach of the Council for India; and a court of law has only a limited though, in this case let us hope, sufficient power over their decisions. When they refused to receive any evidence, or to consider anything, and, in reply to Mr. Banerjee's statement clearly showing that he was within the prescribed age, wrote back that he had "admitted" he was beyond it, the only hope left to the young man was appeal to English justice. The facts of the case, with the documents relating to it, were brought before the Court of Queen's Bench, on the last day but one of last term: when motion was made on the part of one of the rejected Hindoos for a mandamus to the Civil Service Commissioners to hear and receive evidence on the matter. Four judges were on the bench, and their opinions of the course taken by the commissioners are thus reported in the Times of the twelfth of June:

"The Lord Chief Justice: They say in effect, 'Any evidence you may adduce, we shall set at nought.'

"Mr. Justice Mellor: They say, 'You are estopped by your statement at Calcutta,' though it plainly appears that it is quite consistent with his present statement.

"Mr. Justice Blackburn: They totally misapprehend his statement, and then they tell the applicant that upon their mistaken construction of it, they consider it conclusive against him, whereas in reality it is not so.

"Mr. Justice Hannen: They appear to represent it as imperative upon them to take the eastern mode of computation.

"The Lord Chief Justice: Show us that we have jurisdiction, and I think there is no doubt we shall exercise it."

The mandamus accordingly was issued, but the following day was the last day of term, and the case cannot be heard until November. Are the commissioners now waiting to be just under compulsion, or do they hold that even the Queen's Bench cannot force their will? The power of the judges over them is, we believe, paralleled by a man's power of taking a horse to the water, but not being able to make him drink. The commissioners may say, "Well, you are for convincing us against our will. Produce the evidence you bind us to receive. And now, having considered what

you tell us to consider, we are of the same opinion still." The very fact that they are beyond all doubt men of high and honourable character, may make it less easy for them to yield. They feel how conscientiously, and even with a wish to deal justly, and—as far as, in law, was possible to them—even generously, by India, they arrived at their original decision. Knowledge of this may make them only the more tenacious of it, when all the world cries out upon it as a blunder. Here seems to be a new example of an old experience, that sometimes the most ingenious and monstrous blunders are those of the ablest and most conscientious men.

AS THE CROW FLIES.

DUE SOUTH.—DORKING AND WOTTON.

ONE dart from the road the crow makes between Norbury Park and Dorking, to visit Westhumble, "Camilla Lacy," the house built by Mr. Locke for his friend General D'Arblay. To this pleasant retreat "Little Fanny D'Arblay" came when she gave the general her hand, and here she wrote Camilla, one of her most successful novels, drawing some of her characters from the family of Mr. Locke. Madame D'Arblay wrote Camilla, or a Picture of Youth—for which she received three thousand pounds—in 1795, two years after her marriage, and the year her tragedy of Edwy and Elgiva failed at Drury Lane. The world may forget Miss Burney the novelist, but they will never forget the keeper of that admirable Diary, for, amid much silly toadyism and sentimental vanity, she has left us an extraordinary series of pictures of internal court life. It is the only book in which we really see the respectable old royal couple and their wild and selfish children drawn in detail.

Not far away over these hills is Polesden, among whose beech woods is the house where Sheridan retired during one of the lulls of his revelling life, just after his marriage with his second wife, Miss Ogle, a daughter of the Dean of Winchester. It was here in 1795, just after his famous reply on the Begum charge, and his four days' deluge of eloquence and invective, that this extraordinary meteor of a man expended twenty thousand pounds (Heaven and the Jews only knew where he got it). He was living here during the great debates on the mutiny at the Nore and the dreadful Irish Rebellion. A toothless old man is still living at Polesden, who, when young and curly-headed, was a foot-boy in Sheridan's house. He has preserved many traditions of those wild and reckless days. It was not unfrequent, says the old boy, for Sheridan to drive out with four horses, and before the first stage to have the leaders seized by an ambuscade of hook-nosed sheriff's officers. It was well known to the Dorking tradesmen that they

only had to toil up Rainmore Hill to Polesden, to be sure if they did not get their bill paid, to at least secure a box at Drury Lane for themselves and friends. If stories were true "Sherry" was not very scrupulous in his expedients for raising ready supplies, relying on his ultimate power of always obtaining money. On one occasion he sold a butcher a drove of hogs that he had allowed a friendly farmer to drive into his stubbles, and on another time when a choleric and refractory butcher refused to leave a juicy leg of mutton that had been ordered, without being first paid for it, Sherry sent a servant, while the joint was in the parlour for approval, to thrust it in the pot, and begin to sodden it, so as to checkmate the irascible tradesman when he asked for its return.

Not far from Polesden, is Rainmore Common, the breezy summit of a hill that commands Dorking, a wild undulating sweep of fox-haunted furze and brake with a twenty-five miles' range of landscape.

"Can you see St. Paul's from here?" asked a traveller of an old native breaking stones on this high plateau of Surrey down.

"Lor' bless your honour, yea," said the old man, pushing back the wire shade from his eyes; "and generally just before a shower—it's always going to be wet, master, when we see Saint Paul's, so we calls it hereabouts our weather-glass."

Thus time and distance dwarf objects. A king's reign forms a line in a chronicler's book of dynasties, and a huge cathedral becomes at a distance a countryman's weather-glass.

The Aladdin's Palace of a mansion that crowns this embowered hill, and rises like a fortress above Dorking, is Denbies, now Mr. Cubitt's, once Mr. Denison's, and originally built on the site of an obscure farm-house by Mr. Jonathan Tyers, that ingenious and eccentric gentleman who in 1730 bought Vauxhall, in the Borough, and opened a nightly Ridotto *al fresco*. An hypochondriac, like his son Tommy Tyers, who was an amateur poet, and a friend of Dr. Johnson's, the proprietor of the centre of fashion and folly turned the place into a sort of sentimental cemetery. One wood of eight acres he called "the Penseroso," and it was supposed to resemble the pleasantest side of the Valley of the Shadow of Death. There was a small temple with elegiac inscriptions, and a loud but concealed clock to break the intolerable "sound of nothing." A dismal alcove with paintings by roystering Hayman, of The Dying Christian and The Dying Unbeliever, and the stern statue of Truth trampling on a mask, had as a wind-up and final corrector, at the termination of a walk, two "elegantly carved pedestals" with two skulls. Beneath one, a lady's, was written:

Blush not, ye fair, to own me—but be wise,
Nor turn from sad mortality your eyes,

and so on, ending thus:

When coxcombs flatter, and when fools adore,
Here learn the lesson to be vain no more.

Beneath the gentleman's cranium was this poetical rap on the knuckles :

Why start? The case is yours—or will be soon,
Some years perhaps—perhaps another moon.
Life, &c. &c.

Farewell! remember! nor my words despise,
The only happy are the only wise.

All this sham asceticism of the proprietor of the Lambeth tea-gardens, was swept away by the next proprietor in 1767, and instead of dismal graves there are now broad sweeps of sunny lawn, and instead of ladies' and gentlemen's skulls, a scarlet blaze of geranium-beds and golden billows of calceolarias.

The crow drops from Ranmore Hill upon Dorking, which stands close to the old Roman road, or "stone street" leading from Arundel to the Sussex coast. There is one long street with an ugly church of the Georgian Gothic, lying back shily behind the houses, as if ashamed of itself. The whole town is guarded by wooded hills.

The literary pilgrim looks in vain for his special throne—the Marquis of Granby. The famed house, where the fatal widow beguiled old Weller, and where the Shepherd, after imbibing too deeply of his special vanity, was cooled in the horse-trough, is gone. Let the pilgrim be informed that the real "Markis" was the King's Head (now the Post Office), a great coaching house on the Brighton road in the old days, and where many a smoking team drew up when Sammywell was young. Long before old Weller mounted his chariot throne Dorking was a quiet place, much frequented by London merchants (chiefly the Dutch) who came down to see Box Hill, and to eat fresh-caught perch. Here and there a gable end marks a house of this period, but the only history the town claims is that its church has the honour of containing the body of that fat Duke of Norfolk, who died in 1815, and who was famous for eating more beef steaks at a meal than any other Englishman living. This portly peer was the sworn boon companion of Fox and the Regent, and the daring man who, in 1798, consistently opposed war with revolutionary France, and was dismissed from the Lord-Lieutenancy of Yorkshire for having, at the Whig Club, toasted "the Majesty of the People." At Deepdene, that beautifully wooded estate, with hilly plantations rising above it in three dark green billows, "Anastatius" Hope resided, and collected his stores of Etruscan vases, ancient statues, and Thorwaldsen sculptures. At Deepdene Mr. Disraeli wrote *Coningsby*.

Through Deepdene Park, with its huge twisted Spanish chesnuts, and its defaced castle ruin, approached by a funereal triple avenue of limes, the crow skims to an unobtrusive cottage near Brockham Green, that many a midnight has echoed to the songs of that Bacchanalian veteran of the Regent's times, Captain Morris, to whom the fat Duke of Norfolk, after much pressure, gave this asylum for his old age. Under this quiet roof

the Regent has, perhaps, joined in the chorus of "Billy's too Young to drive Us," or "Billy Pitt and the Farmer." The captain not only won the gold cup from the Anacreontic Society for his song "Ad Poculum," but carried his poems through twenty-four editions, and was for years the choicest spirit of the Beef Steak Club, where he was always the chosen brewer of the punch. What a contrast, this quiet haven with noisy Offley's and the club revelries that never shook the Captain's iron constitution! He has been described as one night heartlessly reading a funeral service from the back window of Offley's that opened on Covent Garden churchyard, and pouring out as a swilling libation a crown bowl of punch on the grave of the original of Mr. Thackeray's Costigan, a poor, clever, worn-out sot, who had been recently buried there. If this was the fun of the Regency times, Heaven guard us from its revival under whatever Prince.

The crow cannot tear himself away en route for Southampton without one swoop on Wotton, close to Dorking, where John Evelyn was born. His life was uneventful; first, a traveller and student in Italy, then a secret correspondent of the Royalists, and after the Restoration one of the first and most active fellows of the Royal Society. After much public employment, and much patronage of all good and useful discoveries, Evelyn inherited Wotton, and was here in the great storm of 1703, when above a thousand trees were blown down in sight of the house. Evelyn was a great promoter of tree planting, and he particularly mentions, in his quiet, amiable way, so devoid of all self-assertion, that his grandfather had at Wotton timber standing worth one hundred thousand pounds. Of that timber in Evelyn's own lifetime thirty thousand pounds' worth had fallen by the axe or storm.

They show at Wotton an old beech table, six feet in diameter, which is probably as old as the days of "Silvy Evelyn;" but the oak table he himself mentions, five feet broad, nine feet long, and six inches thick, is gone. The worthy man, whose life was, as Horace Walpole says, "a course of inquiry, study, curiosity, instruction, and benevolence," has described his own house at Wotton, where he wished to found his ideal college, as "large and ancient, suitable to those hospitable times, and so sweetly environed with delicious streams and venerable woods as, in the judgment of strangers as well as Englishmen, it may be compared to one of the most pleasant seats in the nation, most tempting to a great person and a wanton purse, to render it conspicuous; it has rising grounds, meadows, woods, and water in abundance."

Skirting the woods Evelyn loved so well, the crow passes to Leith Hill. From the tower, under whose pavement the builder, Mr. Hull, an eccentric old barrister, who had known Pope and Bishop Berkeley, and who had lived for years close by, in learned retirement, was buried in 1772, the bird sees a region of moor and sandbank, the delight of Mr. Linnell and a

host of landscape painters. The eye has a radius of enjoyment here two hundred miles in circumference. Surrey, Sussex, Hampshire, Berkshire, Bucks, Herts, Middlesex, Kent, Essex, and Wiltshire are visible in miniature. That little misty spot of firs is Nettlebed, in Oxfordshire; that glimmer through a blue dimple of the horizon is the sea glittering through Shoreham Gap, a cleft in the South Downs, thirty miles distant.

The time to catch the glimpse of the sea is about eleven A.M. of a clear but not too hot a morning, when no mist rises from the intervening valleys. Then the sea sparkles for a moment or two as the sun passes Shoreham gap, and, with a glass, you can even catch a white glimpse of a passing sail.

One of the greatest finds ever made of Anglo-Saxon coins was in 1817, at Winterfield Farm, near Dorking. Seven hundred coins in a wooden box were turned up by the plough in a field near an old Roman road, not far from Hanstiebury camp, which is generally thought to have been Danish. The coins, caked together by coppery alloys, which had decomposed since the owner had buried them here with fear and doubt, were lying twelve inches below the surface, in a patch of dark earth, always observed to be specially fertile. There was money of many kings, but chiefly of Ethelwolf (265) and Ethelbert (249). It is supposed they were not buried here before 870, the year Athelstan began to reign. Mr. Barclay, of Bury Hill, a descendant of the Apologist for the Quakers, and of that Mr. David Barclay, the wealthy London merchant, who feasted three successive Georges at his house in Cheapside, bought most of this great find, and generously gave it to the British Museum.

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF JOHN ACKLAND.

A TRUE STORY.

IN THIRTEEN CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

In the following extraordinary narrative nothing is fictitious but the names of the persons.

ABOUT thirty-five or forty years ago, before the border territory of Texas had become a state of the great American Union, a Virginian gentleman, living near Richmond, received from a gentleman of Massachusetts, living near Boston, a letter pressing for punctual payment of a debt owing to the writer of it by the person to whom it was addressed. The debt was a heavy one. It was a loan for a limited period, contracted partly on mortgage and partly on other less valid securities. The period for which it was originally contracted had been frequently renewed at increasing rates of interest. The whole capital would shortly be due; and renewal

of the loan (which seems to have been asked for) was firmly declined, on the ground that the writer of the letter was now winding up his business at Boston preparatory to the undertaking of an entirely new business at Charleston; whither it was his intention to proceed very shortly. Such was the general purport of this letter. The tone of it was courteous, but peremptory. The name of the gentleman who received it we shall suppose to have been Cartwright, and that of the gentleman who wrote it to have been Ackland. Mr. Cartwright was the owner of an estate, not a very large one (which, with the reader's permission, we will call Glenoak), on the banks of the James River. The Cartwrights were an old Virginian family, much esteemed for their antiquity. Three generations of male Cartwright babies had been christened Stuart (because, sir, the Cartwrights had always fought for the Stuarts, sir, in the old country), and in Virginia a very moderate amount of family antiquity has always commanded for the representative of it as much consideration as is accorded in England to the lineage of a Beaufort or a Howard. The personal reputation of this present Philip Stuart Cartwright, however, was not altogether satisfactory. It was regretted that a man of his parts and property should have contributed nothing to the strength and dignity of the territorial aristocracy of old Virginia in the legislature of his state—a legislature of which the Virginians were justly proud. The estate of Glenoak, if well managed, would have doubtless yielded more than the income which was spent, not very reputably, by the owner of it, whenever he had a run of luck at faro. But the estate was not well managed, and, between occasional but extravagant hospitalities on this estate, and equally extravagant indulgence in the stimulant of high stakes and strong liquors at the hells and bars about Richmond, Mr. Philip Cartwright passed his time unprofitably enough; for pulling the devil by the tail is a fatiguing exercise, even to a strong man. Mr. Cartwright was a strong man, however, and a handsome man, and a tall. "Quite a fine man, sir," said his friends. "You may have seen Philip S. Cartwright as drunk as a hag, sir, but you will have always found him quite the cavalier." And, in truth, he had grand manners, and pleasant manners, too, this hard-living, devil-may-care gentleman, which embellished the impression of his vices. And he was a

bold rider and a crack shot; accomplishments which, in all Anglo-Saxon communities, ensure easy popularity to their possessor. Then, too, he had been left, early in life, a widower; and if, since then, he had lived too hard, or lived too loose, this was an extenuating circumstance. Moreover, he had but one child, a pretty little girl; and to her he had ever been a careful, tender, and devoted father. That was another extenuating circumstance. He was doubtless no man's enemy but his own; and the worst ever said of him was, that "Philip S., sir, is a smart man, smart and spry; but wants ballast."

Mr. Cartwright lost no time in answering Mr. Ackland's letter. He answered it with the warmest expressions of gratitude for the consideration and forbearance which he had hitherto received from the writer in the matter of this large, and all too long outstanding debt. He confessed that only a month ago he had been greatly embarrassed how to meet the obligations now falling due; but he was all the more rejoiced, for that reason, to be now enabled to assure his correspondent, that in consequence partly of the unusual excellence of the present rice harvest, and partly owing to other recent and unexpected receipts to a considerable amount, the capital and interest of the debt would be duly paid off at the proper time. As, however, Mr. Ackland, in his letter, had expressed the intention of going to Charleston about that time, he (Mr. Cartwright) begged to remind him that he could not reach Charleston without passing through Richmond on his way thither. He trusted, therefore, that Mr. A. would afford him that opportunity of offering to his New England friend a sample of the hospitality for which old Virginia was justly celebrated. He was naturally anxious to be the first southern gentleman to entertain his distinguished correspondent on Virginian soil. He, therefore, trusted that his esteemed friend would honour him by being his guest at Glenoak for a few days; the more so, as he was desirous not only of introducing Mr. A. to some of the most distinguished men of Virginia, but also of furnishing him with letters to many influential friends of his in South Carolina, whose acquaintance Mr. A. would probably find useful in the course of his business at Charleston. If, therefore, Mr. A. could manage to be at Richmond on the — proximo, he (Mr. C.) would have the honour of meeting him there, and conducting him to Glenoak,

where all would be in readiness for the immediate and satisfactory settlement of their accounts.

When Mr. Ackland received this letter, he was sitting in his office at Boston, and conversing with his cousin, Tom Ackland. Tom Ackland was a rising young lawyer, and the only living relative of our Mr. John Ackland, of the firm of Ackland Brothers. Ackland's other brother, who was also Ackland senior, had died some years ago, and Ackland junior had since then been carrying on the business of the firm, not very willingly, and not very successfully.

"What do you think of that, Tom?" said Mr. John Ackland, tossing over the letter to his cousin.

"Well," said Tom, after reading it through, hastily enough, "I think you had better accept the invitation, for I suspect it is about the only thing you will ever get out of Philip Cartwright. As to his paying up, I don't believe a word of what he says on that score."

"I don't much believe in it neither," said Mr. John, "and I'm sadly afraid the debt is a bad one. But I can't afford to lose it: and 'twill be a great bore to have to foreclose. Even then, too, I shan't recover half of the capital. What do you think, Tom?"

Mr. Ackland spoke with a weary tone of voice and an undecided manner, like a man who is tired of some load which he is either too weak or too lazy to shake off.

"Well, you must pass through Richmond, Jack, and Glenoak will be as pleasant a halt as you can have. Drink as much of Cartwright's wine, and smoke as many of his cigars as you can; for I doubt if you'll get back any of your money except in that kind. However, you *can* afford to lose it, so don't be so downhearted, man. And as for this Charleston business——"

"Oh!" said John Ackland, impatiently, "the best of the Charleston business is that it is not Boston business. I am longing, Tom, to be away from here, and the sooner I can start the better. Have you heard (I did yesterday at the Albion) that Mary, I mean Mrs. Mordent, and her husband, are expected back in Boston next month?"

"Ah, Jack, Jack!" exclaimed Tom, "you will get over this sooner than you think, man, and come back to us one of these days with a bofncing, black-eyed Carolinian beauty, and half-a-dozen little Ackland brothers and sisters too."

"I have got over it, Tom. At my time

of life I don't think there is much to get over."

"Your time of life, Jack! What nonsense."

"Well, I am not a patriarch, certainly," said Mr. John Ackland. "But I don't want to be a patriarch, Tom: and I don't think I ever shall be a patriarch. The best part of my life was short enough, Heaven knows, and I hope (now that is over) that the worst part of it won't be very long. I don't think it *will* be very long, Tom. Anyhow, I have no mind to meet Mr. and Mrs. Mordent again just now, so I shall accept Cartwright's invitation, and now, for mercy's sake, no more about business for to-day, Tom."

He did accept the invitation: and, at the date proposed, John Ackland arrived at Richmond late in the evening of a hot June day. He was much fatigued by his long journey and the heat of the weather; and not at all sorry to accept an invitation (which he received through Cartwright, who met him on his arrival) from Mr. D., the accomplished editor of the Richmond Courier, to sup and sleep at that gentleman's house before going on to Glenoak. Mr. D. having heard from Cartwright of Mr. Ackland's intended visit to the south, and knowing that he could not arrive in Richmond till late in the evening, had, with true Virginian hospitality, insisted on the two gentlemen passing the night at his house in town; and it had been arranged that Cartwright should drive Mr. D. and Mr. Ackland over to Glenoak on the following day. Mr. Ackland was very cordially received by his Richmond host, an agreeable and cultivated man. The fatigue of his long journey secured him a good night's rest; and, being an early riser, he had indulged his curiosity by a solitary stroll through the town, before the three gentlemen met at breakfast the next morning. After breakfast, he was conducted by his two friends to see the lions of the place. When they had visited the courthouse and the senate-house,

"Now, Mr. Editor," said Cartwright, "I shall ask permission to leave my friend here under your good care for an hour or so. I am going to fetch my little girl from school. You know she is at Miss Grindley's finishing establishment for young ladies; and though she is only ten years old, Miss G. assures me that Virginia Cartwright is her most forward pupil. We will take this little puss with us, if you please. What o'clock is it now?"

Cartwright looked at his watch, and Mr. D. looked at his watch. Yawning and looking at your watch are infectious gestures. John Ackland also put his hand to his waistcoat-pocket, and then suddenly remembering that his watch was not there, he felt awkward, and blushed. John Ackland was a shy man, and a lazy man in everything but the exercise of self-torment. He was in the habit of interpreting every trifle to his own disadvantage. This unfortunate way of regarding all external phenomena was constantly disturbing his otherwise habitual langor with an internal sensation of extreme awkwardness. And whenever John Ackland felt awkward he blushed.

"Twenty minutes to one," said Mr. D.

"Good; then," said Cartwright, "in one hour, as near as may be, I and my little girl will be at your door with the waggon, and phaeton. Can you be ready by then?"

"All right," answered the editor, "we shall just have time for a light luncheon."

"Will it be out of your way, Mr. D.," said Ackland, after Cartwright had left them, "to pass by D'Oiley's, the watch-maker's, in — street?"

"Not at all. How do you happen to know the name of that store, though?"

"I noticed it, whilst strolling through the town this morning. My chronometer has been losing time since I came south; and I asked Mr. D'Oiley to look at it, saying I would call or send for it before leaving town this afternoon."

When the watchmaker handed back the chronometer to Mr. Ackland, "That watch was never made in the States, I reckon, sir?" said he.

"No. It is English."

"Geneva works, though. I'll warrant your chronometer, sir, to go right for six years now. Splendid piece of workmanship, sir."

Mr. Ackland was much pleased with his pretty little new acquaintance, Virginia Cartwright. She was a dark-eyed lively child, who promised to become a very beautiful woman, and was singularly graceful for that awkward age in the life of a young lady which closes her first decade. Her father seemed to be immensely proud of, as well as tenderly attached to, the little girl. Every little incident on their way to Glenoak suggested to him some anecdote of her childhood which he related to his guest in terms, no doubt inadequately expressive of her extraordinary merits. Once he said, "Good God, sir, when I think

what would become of that child if anything were to happen——" But he finished the sentence only by whipping on the horses.

A large assembly of Virginia notables had been invited to Glenoak to meet Mr. Cartwright's New England guest. "I am going to be shown off," thought John Ackland to himself; and he entered the house, hot and blushing, like the sun rising through a fog. Among these notables was Judge Griffin, "Our greatest legal authority, sir," whispered Cartwright, as he pushed his guest forward, and presented him to the judge with expressions of overflowing eulogy and friendship.

Mr. Ackland, of Boston city, was a representative man, he said, "a splendid specimen, sir, of our great merchant princes of the North, whom he was proud to receive under his roof. More than that, he himself was under deep obligations (why should he be ashamed to avow it?), the very deepest obligations to his worthy friend and honoured guest, John K. Ackland!" Here Mr. Cartwright, apparently under the impression that he had been proposing a toast, paused, and prepared to lift his glass to his lips, but finding that he had, just then, no glass to lift, he informed the judge and his other guests that dinner would soon be served, and expressed a hope that in the meanwhile Mr. Ackland would favour him with a few moments of his private attention for the settlement of a matter of business to which, indeed, he partly owed the honour of that gentleman's visit. The two gentlemen were then closeted together for nearly an hour. When they rejoined the rest of the company at dinner, Mr. Cartwright appeared to have made (during their recent interview) a most favourable impression on his New England guest. Host and guest were already on terms of the most cordial intimacy with each other, and Cartwright himself was in the highest possible spirits. One of the company present on that occasion, a very young gentleman, who had had some betting transactions with the owner of Glenoak—transactions from which he had derived a very high appreciation of the remarkable 'cuteness of that gentleman—expressed to his neighbour at table a decided opinion that his friend Philip S. must certainly have succeeded, before dinner, in getting a pot o' money out of the Yankee, who looked as well pleased as people usually do when they have done something foolish. After dinner, when the gentle-

men lit their cigars, and strolled into the garden, Cartwright linking one arm in that of Judge Griffin, and the other in that of John Ackland, exclaimed,

"I wish, judge, that you, whose powers of persuasion are irresistible, would induce my friend here to listen to reason. No, no!" he continued, as John Ackland made some gesture of impatience, "no, my esteemed friend, why should I conceal the truth? The fact is, judge, that Mr. Ackland and myself have had some pecuniary transactions with each other, in which he has been creditor, let me add, the most forbearing and considerate creditor that ever man had, and I, of course, debtor——"

"A highly honourable one," put in John Ackland.

"My dear sir, that is the very point in question. Allow me to deserve the flattering epithet. Judge Griffin shall decide the case. You must know, judge, that the unfortunate force of circumstances (why should I be ashamed to own it?) has compelled me to keep this gentleman waiting an unconscionably long time for the repayment of a considerable sum of money which he has been good enough to advance to me, partly on my personal security. Under these circumstances, I was naturally anxious that he should not, finally, be a loser by the generosity of his patience. It is, therefore, needless to say that the rate of interest offered by myself for the renewed postponement of the liquidation of this loan was, in the last instance, a high one. I am happy to say that I have, this afternoon, had the pleasure of refunding to my friend the entire capital of the debt. On that capital, however, a year's interest was still owing. Of course I added the amount of it to that of the capital. But he (wonderful man!) refuses—absolutely refuses—to receive it. Tell him, judge (you know me), that he is depriving me of a luxury which I have too seldom enjoyed—the luxury of paying my debts—and that the capital——"

"Was a very large one," interrupted Mr. Ackland, who had been listening with growing impatience to this speech. "Pardon me if I confess that I had not counted on the entire recovery of it—especially so soon. The interest to which Mr. Cartwright has referred was fixed in accordance with that erroneous impression. For which—ahem—my excuse must be, sir, that—well, that I am not—never was—a man of sanguine temperament. Sir, Mr. Cartwright has greatly embarrassed me. Under present circumstances, I really—I could

not—ahem—tax my friend here so heavily on a debt of—of—well, yes—of that amount, which has been so unexpectedly—ahem. I really—I—am not a usurer, sir, though I am a merchant.”

Mr. Ackland said all this with the difficult hesitation of an exceedingly shy man, which he was, and blushing up to the roots of his hair. As soon as he had struggled through the effort of saying it, and thereby worked himself into a state of feeling so defensive as to be almost offensive, he extricated his arm from the embrace of his host, and, with an awkward bow, hastened to join the ladies in the parlour.

“Odd man, that,” said Judge Griffin.

“Shy and proud,” said Cartwright, “but as fine a fellow as ever lived.”

John Ackland wrote from Glenoak to his Cousin Tom, expressing much pleasure in his visit there. The change of scene and air had agreed with him, notwithstanding the great heat of the season, and he already felt in better health and spirits than when he left Boston. He related the result of the interview which had taken place between himself and his host on the day of his arrival at Glenoak. He had the cash now with him in notes. But the amount was so large that he should of course exchange them at the Richmond Bank for a credit on their correspondents at Charleston. It was a strange notion of Cartwright's to insist on paying the money in notes.

“He seems to have been under the impression that I should not have been equally well satisfied with his signature. Which made me feel very awkward, my dear Tom.”

He had felt still more awkward in consenting to take the last year's interest on that loan at the rate originally stipulated. Tom knew that he would not have raised it so high if he had ever had any hope of recovering the entire capital at the expiration of the term. However, there was no help for it. Cartwright would have it. Cartwright had behaved exceedingly well. Very much like a gentleman. He had really conceived a great regard for his present host. In despite of some obvious faults of character, and he feared also of conduct, there was so much good in the man. C. was a most pleasant companion, and had shown the greatest delicacy in this matter. The

man's affection for his daughter, too, was quite touching; and the child herself was charming. John Ackland then described his impressions of a slave plantation at some length. His abhorrence of the whole system was even more intense than before. Not because he had noticed any great cruelty in the treatment of the slaves on this plantation, but because the system was one which rendered even kindness itself an instrument of degradation; and these unfortunate blacks appeared to him to be in a mental and moral condition which, without justifying it, gave a hideous plausibility to the cool assertion of their owners that coloured humanity is not humanity at all. He avoided all discussion on this subject, however, for, as Tom knew, there was nothing he hated so much as controversy. At first he had felt “a little awkward” at being the only Northerner amongst so many slave proprietors. But now he felt quite at his ease with them all. Especially with Cartwright. 'Twas a pity that man had been born South. He had been brought up there to idleness and arrogance, but his natural disposition fitted him for better things. Glenoak was a very pleasant place. So pleasant, that he was reluctant to leave it. And, in fact, there was no real necessity for going to Charleston so soon. The weather was horribly hot. He had not yet been up to the exertion even of going to Richmond to deposit the notes he had received from Cartwright. He thought he should probably remain some days longer—perhaps a fortnight longer—at Glenoak.

On the evening of the day he wrote this letter, however, an incident occurred which changed Mr. Ackland's disposition to prolong his stay at Glenoak.

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VERONICA.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE."
IN FIVE BOOKS.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER XV. LADY TALLIS.

It was not until Mr. Levincourt had been seated for some time in the railway carriage, that he remembered that he was ignorant of Lady Tallis's address. Young Lockwood had said that she was in London, but where the vicar knew not.

"Maud!" said he, suddenly, "how are we to find your aunt?"

Maud was leaning her weary head against the cushions, and her eyes were closed. She had not been sleeping, however, for she immediately opened her eyes, and repeated the vicar's words,

"How are we to find my aunt?"

"Yes, how? In the whirl, and confusion, and misery of this dreadful departure it never occurred to me that I do not know Lady Tallis's address! Her last letter was dated from the country."

"Mr.—Mrs. Lockwood knows where Aunt Hilda is," answered Maud, after a moment's reflection.

"Yes, yes, yes," said the vicar, with peevish irritability, "Mrs. Lockwood knows! But where can these people be found? Merciful Heavens, it is enough to madden one! It is all confusion and hopeless misery!"

"Dear Uncle Charles, in this I think I can help you. I remember the Lockwoods' address. They live in a street called Gower-street. Do you know it?"

"Gower-street? Are you sure? How do you know?"

"Mr. Lockwood mentioned that his

mother had a house there. Her husband bequeathed it to her, and she lives there."

"Well, I suppose we must drive there the first thing. I know of no other way."

After that the vicar closed his eyes also. But for a long time his brain was tormented by whirling thoughts. Occasionally a gleam of something like hope darted into his mind. Might it not be possible that all would yet go well with Veronica? Some fathers would have deemed that by no possibility could it be altogether well with her. It could not be well to be the wife of a man who had induced her to leave her home clandestinely, to deceive and inflict torturing anxiety on her father; a man who had, at the least, caused a temporary slur to be cast on her reputation, and who had risked tarnishing her good name for ever. But in his present wretchedness it seemed to the vicar that to know Veronica Sir John Gale's wife, would in itself be happiness and peace of mind. And it must be remembered that Charles Levincourt was at heart a worldly man; that the somewhat lax tone of morals and want of high principle which he had observed in Sir John Gale's conversation would by no means have induced him to refuse the baronet his daughter's hand, had he asked for it openly. But he was keenly alive to the disgrace of his daughter's elopement; and not the least sharp pang he felt was caused by the reflection that Veronica had thoroughly deceived him.

At length he fell into an uneasy sleep, through which he was dimly conscious of mental pain, and of a dread of waking. From this slumber he was aroused by Maud's hand on his shoulder and Maud's voice in his ear, faltering out that she believed they must have reached London.

They were in London. The railway station looked inexpressibly dreary, with its long vistas ending in black shadow, its sickly lamps blinking like eyes that have watched all night and are weary, and its vast glazed roof, through which the grey dawn was beginning to glimmer.

It was yet too early to attempt to go to Mrs. Lockwood's house. They must wait at least a couple of hours. The vicar looked so worn, aged, and ill, that Maud tried to persuade him to seek some rest at the hotel close to the station, promising that he should be roused in due time. But he refused to do so.

"Sit here," he said, leading Maud into a waiting-room, where there was a dull coke fire smouldering slowly, and where a solitary gas-light shed a yellow glare over a huge, bare, shining centre table, leaving the rest of the apartment in almost darkness. "You will be safe and unmolested here. I must go and make some inquiries—try to find some trace—. Remain here till I return."

Maud thought she had never seen a room so utterly soul-depressing. No place would have appeared cheerful to her at that moment; but this railway waiting-room was truly a dreary and forlorn apartment. She sat there cowering over the dull red fire, sick, and chilly, and sad; listening nervously to every echoing footfall on the long platform without; to the whistle of some distant engine, screaming as though it had lost its way in the labyrinthine network of lines that converged just outside the great terminus, and were wildly crying for help and guidance; listening to the frequent clang of a heavy swing-door, the occasional sound of voices (once a man laughed aloud, and she involuntarily put her hands up to her startled ears to shut out the sound that jarred on every quivering nerve with agonising discord), and to the loud, deliberate ticking of a clock above the waiting-room door.

At length—how long the time had seemed!—Mr. Levincourt returned.

Maud started up, and tried to read in his face if he had any tidings of Veronica, but she did not venture to speak. He answered her appealing look:

"I have seen the station-master," he said. "They have not been here. I believe that much is certain. The man was civil, and caused inquiries to be made among the people—oh, my God, that I should have to endure this degradation!—but there was no trace of such people as I

described. This man made a suggestion. They might have left the main line at Dibley, and either come to London by the other line, thus arriving at a station at the opposite end of the town; or—as I think more probable—have reached the junction that communicates with the coast railways, and so got down to the sea without touching London at all."

"O, Uncle Charles!"

"Come, my poor child, let me at least put you into a shelter where you will be safe from the contamination of our disgrace. You look half dead, my poor Maudie! Come, there is a cab waiting here outside."

As Maud moved towards the door to obey his summons, the light of the gas-lamp fell full on her pale face, and he almost exclaimed aloud at her startling resemblance to her mother.

It seemed to the vicar that the remembrance of his old love, thus called up at this moment, filled his heart with bitterness even to overflowing.

"O me!" he groaned; "I wish it were all over! I am weary of my life."

The cab rattled over the stones through the still nearly empty streets.

Maud's remembrance of any part of London was very vague. She had never even seen the neighbourhoods through which she was now being jolted. It all looked squalid, mean, grimy, and uninviting under the morning light. At last they came into a long street, of which the further end was veiled and concealed by a dense foggy vapour.

"What number, miss?" asked the cabman, turning round on his seat.

"What do you say?" asked Maud, faintly.

"What number, miss? This 'ere is Gower-street."

"O!" cried Maud, despairingly. "I don't remember the number!"

The cabman had pulled up his horse, and was now examining the lash of his whip with an air of philosophical indifference, like a man who is weighed upon by no sense of responsibility. After a minute or so, he observed, with great calmness, "That's oekard; Gower-street is raythur a long street, and it'll take some time to knock at all the doors both sides o' the way." Then he resumed the examination of his whip lash.

"O, Uncle Charles, I am so sorry!" murmured Maud. "What shall we do?"

Mr. Levincourt jumped out of the cab,

and ran to a door where there was a young woman washing the steps.

"Do you happen to know," he asked, "whereabouts in this street a Mrs. Lockwood lives?"

"Mrs. Lockwood!" echoed the girl, drying her steaming arms on her apron, "*this* is Mrs. Lockwood's."

The vicar beckoned to the cabman, who had also alighted by this time, and who now led his raw-boned horse up to the door at a funeral pace.

"My good girl," said the vicar, "will you take a message to your mistress *at once*? It is of the greatest importance."

"Missis ain't up yet," rejoined the servant, staring first at him, then at Maud, and lastly at the cabman, from whom she received a confidential wink, which seemed to claim a common vantage-ground of Cockneyhood between himself and her, and to separate them both from the vicar and his ward.

"I will send up this card to her," said Mr. Levincourt. He took out a card and pencil, and wrote some words hastily. Then he gave the girl the card together with a shilling, and begged her to lose no time in delivering the former to her mistress, whilst she was to keep the latter for herself.

The administration of the bribe appeared to raise the vicar in the cabman's estimation. The latter officiously pulled down the window-glass on the side next the house, so that Maud could put her head out, and then stood with the handle of the cab door in his hand, ready for any emergency.

The progress of the servant to her mistress's bedroom was retarded by her efforts to decipher what was written on the card, an attempt in which she only partially succeeded. In about five minutes she came down again, and said to the vicar:

"Missus's best compliments, and the lady as you're a looking for is lodging in the 'ouse. She's on the first-floor, and will you please walk into the drawing-room?"

The vicar and Maud followed the girl up-stairs into a front room, furnished as a sitting-room. It communicated by folding doors, which were now closed, with another apartment.

The servant drew up the yellow window-blinds, desired the visitors to be seated, and asked as she prepared to leave the room:

"Who shall I say, please?"

"Mr. Levincourt, and — Stay! You had better take my card in to her ladyship,

and say that her niece is here with me, and would be glad if she might see her."

The servant departed into the adjoining chamber, as it appeared, for the sound of voices very slightly muffled by the folding-doors was heard immediately. In a very few minutes the girl returned, begging Maud to follow her.

"She ain't up yet, but she'd like to see you, miss; and she'll come out to you, sir, as soon as possible."

Maud obeyed her aunt's summons, and the vicar was left alone, standing at the window, and looking at the monotonous line of the opposite houses. He was, in a measure, relieved by the fact that the first surprise and shock to Lady Tallis of his presence and his errand in London would be over before he saw her. He felt a strong persuasion that tact and self-possession were by no means poor Hilda's distinguishing characteristics, and he had nervously dreaded the first meeting with her. Although he had placed himself as far as possible from the folding-doors, he could hear the voices rising and falling in the adjoining room, and occasionally could distinguish her ladyship's tones in a shrill exclamation.

He tapped his fingers with irritable impatience on the window. Why did not Maud urge her aunt to hasten? She knew that every minute was of importance to him. He would wait no longer. He would go away, and return later.

As he so thought, the door opened, and there appeared the woman whom he had last seen in the bloom of her youth more than a score of years ago. The remembrance of the beautiful Hilda Delaney was very distinct in his mind. At the sound of the opening door, he turned round and beheld a figure startlingly at variance with that remembrance: a small, lean, pale old woman, huddled in a dark-coloured wrapper, and with a quantity of soft grey hair untidily thrust into a brown-silk net.

"My dear friend," said she, taking both the vicar's hands—"my poor dear friend!"

Her voice had an odd, cracked sound, like the tone of a broken musical instrument which has once given forth sweet notes; and she spoke with as unmistakable a brogue as though she had never passed a day out of the County Cork.

"Ah! ye wouldn't have known me, now, would ye?" she continued, looking up into the vicar's face.

"Yes," he answered, after an instant's glance—"Yes, I should have known you."

And indeed as he looked, her face became familiar to his eyes. She retained the exquisite delicacy of skin which had been one of her chief beauties, but it was now blanched and wan, and marked with three or four deep lines round the mouth, though on the forehead it remained smooth. There was still the regular clear-cut outline, but exaggerated into sharpness. There were still the large, finely-shaped, lustrous hazel eyes, but with a glitter in them that seemed too bright for health, and with traces of much wailing and weeping in their heavy lids. She was a kindly, foolish, garrulous, utterly undignified woman.

"I have come," said the vicar, "to ask you to give shelter and protection to this dear child. My house is no home for her now, and Heaven knows when I shall return to it myself. I suppose Maud has—has told you?"

"Ah, my dear Mr. Levincourt, where would the child find shelter and protection if not with her poor dear mother's only sister? And hasn't it been the wish of my heart to have her with me all these years? And indeed when Clara died I would have adopted her outright, if I'd been let. But not having any daughter of my own—though to be sure a boy would have been best, because of the baronetcy, and he never forgave me, I believe, for not giving him a son—of course I—But indeed I am truly distressed at your misfortune, and I hope that things may not be so bad as ye fear. A runaway mar'ge is objectionable, there's no doubt of that in the world. Still, ye know, my dear Mr. Levincourt, it won't be the first, and I'd wager not the last. And upon my honour I can't see but that the runaway mar'ges may turn out as well sometimes as those that are arranged in the regular way; though goodness knows that is not saying much, after all."

Here the poor lady paused to heave a deep sigh, and then, seating herself close to Maud, she took her niece's hand and pressed it affectionately.

The vicar perceived that Lady Tallis had but a very imperfect conception of the real state of the case. The truth was, that she had not permitted Maud to explain it to her, being too much absorbed in the joy and surprise of seeing her niece to give heed or sympathy to the fate of the vicar's daughter. Her life had been so utterly joyless and empty of affection for so many years, that the lonely woman not unnaturally clutched at this chance of happiness

with the selfish eagerness of a starving creature who snatches at food.

"It is very, very dreadful, Aunt Hilda," Maud had said, lowering her voice, lest it should reach the ears of the vicar in the next room. "Mr. Levincourt will be heartbroken if he does not find her. And I love her so dearly. My poor Veronica! Oh, why, why did she leave us?"

But her aunt could not help dwelling on the hope that out of this trouble might come a gleam of comfort to her own desolate life.

She had soothed and kissed the sobbing girl, and had poured out a stream of incoherent talk, as she hastily huddled some clothes about her.

"Hush, dear child! Don't be fretting, my poor pet! You will stay here with me, safe, now! Sure they'll find her beyond a doubt. Of course the man will marry her. And as to running away, why, my darling child, though I'd be loath to inculcate the practice, or to recommend it to any well-brought-up girl, still ye know very well that it's a thing that happens every day. There was Miss Grogan, of the Queen's County, one of the most dashing girls that ye ever saw in all your days, eloped with a subaltern in a marching regiment. But she had fifty thousand pounds of her own, the very moment she came of age; so of course they were very comfortable in a worldly point of view, and the whole county visited them just as much as if they had had banns published in the parish church every day for a year. And yet, at first, her family were in the greatest distress—the very greatest distress—though he was a second cousin of Lord Clontarf, and an extremely elegant young fellow. But of course I understand Mr. Levincourt's feelings, and I am sincerely sorry for him—I am indeed."

So, in speaking to the vicar, her tone, although not unsympathising, was very different from what it would have been had she at all realised the terrible apprehensions which racked his mind.

"Ye'll stay and have a mouthful of breakfast with me, my dear Mr. Levincourt?" she said, seeing him about to depart. "I will have it got ready immediately. And indeed you must both be fainting, after travelling all night, too—What's the matter?"

The question was caused by a ghastly change which had come over the vicar's face. His eyes were fixed on the direction on an envelope which lay on the table. He

pointed to it, silently. Lady Tallis stared in alarm and bewilderment; but Maud, springing to the vicar's side, looked over his shoulder at the writing.

"Oh, Aunt Hilda!" she gasped. "What does this mean?"

"What, child? What in the world is the matter? That? Sure that's a bill, sent in by my shoemaker!"

"But the name?" said the vicar, with a sudden, startling fierceness.

"The name? Well, it's my name; whose else should it be? Oh, to be sure—I see now! Ah! ye didn't know that he took another name about two years ago. Did ye never hear of his uncle, the rich alderman? The alderman left him thirty thousand pounds, on condition that he should tack his name on to his old one, and give him the honour and glory of sending down his own plebeian appellation with the baronetcy. So of course when he changed his name, I changed mine; for I *am* his wife, though I make no doubt that he would be glad enough to deny it if he could. Only that, being his wife, he has more power to tyrannise over me than he has over anybody else. But then——"

"But what is he called now, Aunt Hilda?" interrupted Maud, seeing that her guardian was in an agony of speechless suspense. "What names does—does your husband go by?"

"Indeed, my pet, *that's* more than I can say; but his rightful style and title is Sir John Tallis Gale, Baronet, and I suppose you knew that much before!"

"O my God!" groaned the vicar, sinking into a chair, and letting his head drop on his hands.

"Uncle Charles!" screamed Maud, throwing her arms around him. "O Uncle Charles! It will kill him!"

But the vicar was not dying. He was living to a rush of horrible sensations; grief, astonishment, shame, and anger. The indelibility of the disgrace inflicted on him; the hopelessness of any remedy; the infamy that must attend his child's future life, were all present to his mind with instant and torturing vividness. But of these mingled emotions, anger was the predominant one, and it grew fiercer with every second that passed. His love for his daughter had ever been marked more by pride than by depth or tenderness. This pride was now trampled in the dust, and a feeling of implacable resentment arose in his mind against her who had inflicted the anguish of such a humiliation.

He raised his face distorted by passion.

"From this hour forth I disown and abandon her," he said in quivering tones. "No one is my friend who speaks her name to me. In the infamy she has chosen, let her live and die. And may God so punish her for the misery she has caused——"

Maud fell down on her knees before him and seized his hands. "Oh hush, oh pray, pray hush, dear Uncle Charles!" she sobbed out. "Think how sorry you would be if you said the words! How you would repent and be sorry all your life long!"

"For mercy's sake!" exclaimed Lady Tallis, in a tremulous voice, "what is it all about? My dearest child, you positively must not sob in that heart-breaking manner! Sure you'll make yourself ill."

"And for one who is not worth a tear!" added the vicar. "For one who—— But I will never mention her name again. It is over. She is lost and gone irrevocably. Lady Tallis, I would have spared you this, if I could have guessed the extent of the degradation that has fallen upon me. My presence in your house at this moment is almost an outrage."

The poor lady sat down in a chair, and pressing her hands to her forehead, began to whimper. "I'd be unspeakably obliged to ye, Mr. Levincourt," she said, "if you would do me the favour to explain. My poor head is in a whirl of confusion. I really and truly am not strong enough to support this kind of thing!"

"We have each of us a horrible burden to support," rejoined the vicar, almost sternly. "And God knows that mine is not the least heavy. You have been entirely separated from your husband for some years?"

"Oh, indeed I have! That is to say, there never has been a legal separation, but——"

The vicar interrupted her. "He has assumed another name and has been living abroad?"

"As to the name, I am sure of that, because I learnt it from his agent, to whom I am sometimes compelled to have recourse for money. But for where he has been living, I assure you, my dear Mr. Levincourt——"

"The villain who has carried away my daughter—stolen her from a home in which he had received every kindness and hospitable care that my means permitted me to

lavish on him—that black-hearted, thankless, infamous scoundrel, Lady Tallis, is—Sir John Gale.”

THE END OF THE FIRST BOOK.

WHY DOES A POINTER POINT?

It is an accomplishment which has introduced him to polite society, and we can understand why he goes on doing it; but what made him begin? I asked the question the other day when my liver-and-white puppy, Don, first “snuffed the tainted gale.” I tried him in a bean stubble one evening in August, after a shower. This field and the next barley stubble are alive with birds calling in all directions. The ground is hot and damp, and there can be no doubt about the scent. I enter by the gap next the four-acre pond, and let him draw up the wind. He begins to be affected strangely; his large, mild, puppy face is turned towards the game. The rigidity of the tail becomes general. No more capers, no more gambols for Don at present! He is paralysed by his sensations: not a muscle moves except those of his sensitive nose. I mutter warningly, “To-o, Ho, Don!” but there is no need; the breed is too true; he does not stir. I pause a few minutes. Now I’ll move him. “Hold up, Don! hold up, good dog!” But his emotions are too strong for action; he only opens his mouth and slobbers, and bends a very stiff neck very slightly towards me. I encourage him to move, and at last he lifts one leg very slowly, and after that another; and so by dint of great encouragement, I partly break the spell and we advance towards the game—at the rate, say, of a mile in two or three days.

Some ancestor of Don’s, undoubtedly set out with pointing a little. No matter why; the motives of men and dogs are very various. All must admit that somebody took it into his head to invent a Chinese puzzle; in the nature of things why might not some dog take it into his head to point? The birds rose close to his nose perhaps; his master was near; he was a timid dog (pointers are very timid to this day), and an obedient dog. “Steady, Don the first!” He stops the pursuit, he glances round at his master, then he crouches to the ground looking towards the birds. As his nose is stretched out in one direction, his tail, by the law of contraries, will naturally be extended in the other. Grant the first faint indication of a point, and all the rest of his curious performance follows in time by the simple law of “development.”

The breeder’s art can both eliminate qualities and produce them. As with qualities of the dog’s mind so with peculiarities of the body in other creatures. Sir John Sebright declared that “he would produce any given feather (in his bantams) in three years, but it would take him six years to obtain head and beak.” Those who have seen the parti-coloured little herds of the Channel Islands, seldom exceeding three or four in number, would be surprised at the

novelty of a herd of fifty self-coloured “Aldernays,” (so called) obtained in Buckinghamshire by about thirty years’ selection. In this, as in all similar cases of long selection, persistence of type was strongly marked. Colour is the least important, and the least permanent mark of breed; but so great was the effect of selection and purity of blood, that the self-coloured and lion-skinned bulls, in this unrivalled herd, were invariably the sires of self-coloured calves, even when the mother was spotted; such is the potency of pure blood, which overcomes the less persistent qualities of inferior animals.

The term, “pure blood,” is a very pregnant one. It does not refer to chemical composition. The “base puddle” of a common hack does not differ in form, colour, and chemical composition of its corpuscles, from the “noble blood” that runs in the veins of a “descendant of many sires;” but in-and-in breeding endows the blood with qualities which are hereditary. “High-bred” is an arbitrary term, signifying that certain qualities have been accumulated by ancestral selection. When applied to a bantam or a pigeon, it means that he and his family are and have been true to feather, &c. A high-bred sheep is a south-down, for example, which hands down its peculiar qualities of form, and colour, and disposition with great persistence, because it is an old breed, which has been “selected” by nature and art until the type is almost as uniform as if the animals had been cast like bullets, in one mould. Habits and qualities, however they may be first acquired, become hereditary. And this holds good with plants as with animals. The ornamental shrubs, called by nurserymen, Americans, have been accustomed at home to the soft light soil, free from chalk or clay, which prevails there; and here they require peat, soft loam, leaf-mould, &c. The cause can in this case be traced to the delicate structure of the root. The pineapple ripens better in our hot-houses in the spring than in the summer, because it cannot bear the bright light of our atmosphere. In its home in the tropics, the heat is accompanied by vapour, and the sun’s rays do not burn, however high the temperature. The fig, the vine, and the orange-tree, love bright skies; but tropical plants are soon exhausted with us, if we give them the heat which makes them live fast, and do not protect them from the strong light which exhausts them.

In the great conservatory at Kew, newly built for Dr. Hooker’s Sikkim rhododendrons, we read many similar lessons. The lofty mountains that spring from the plains of Bengal, are swathed in fog and mist, particularly at their base. When ascending the Himalayas, Dr. Hooker collected the seeds of pines and rhododendrons in the three zones of vegetation through which he passed: from the tropics at the base, to the Arctic region where the little rhododendron nivale spreads its tiny blossoms in the snow. The seedlings were found in this country to possess different constitutional powers of resisting cold; and those from the

laud of fog, exhibited their hereditary habits, in a dislike to a dry air and bright light.

The broad distinctions of habit limit the cultivation of the cereals to climates suited to them. Barley and oats, for example, though destroyed by severe frosts, ripen in Lapland and in Russia: while wheat, though it stands severe winters, is hardly capable of ripening north of St. Petersburg. Rye and buckwheat both grow on soils too poor for the cultivation of any variety of wheat except that coarse sort called Spelt. Maize yields its enormous crops on the rich soils in the plains of the Ohio, and wherever the summer heat is a little greater than in England. Cobbett's attempt to introduce the cultivation of maize in England, and his determination to exalt "Cobbett's corn" over the potato was an unsuccessful fight against the habit of a plant. The maize has, however, advanced northward, while the vine has retreated southward.

The distinguishing characters of plants manifest themselves in minute peculiarities that seem almost to resemble the personal preferences and freaks of the nobler animals. Barley requires a friable soil; wheat should be sown on strong land. Melons grow best in hard clayey earth, and cucumbers in soft soil full of manure. Strawberries and many other fruits, when potted, should have the earth rammed hard into the pots. The habit and successful cultivation of plants can only be learned by practice and experience. A theorist without practice and with only an abstract knowledge of the advantage of light, air, "permeation of moisture," and a deep seed-bed, would lose his crop while he applied his knowledge.

The successful cultivation of farm crops is an art which requires considerable skill, and in horticulture many "difficult" plants require extraordinary nicety of management. Habit cannot be easily cast off; when once acquired, it becomes persistent and follows the plant, even when removed to new soils and climates. The little moon-wort fern that grows on the Surrey downs, sickens if removed to a sheltered spot. In the sub-tropical climate of Alabama, native plants do not awaken in spring, after their brief winter rest, so soon as those introduced from colder climates. Our white clover is always the most advanced of the pasture grasses, and much earlier than the Bermuda grass which was brought from the valley of the Ganges, where it flourishes in the full blaze of the sun.

In the states of New York, Minnesota, Michigan, and in the northern states generally, "fall wheat" is sown early in September; spring wheat is sown in May, and even as late as June. The latter acquires an annual; the former a biennial, character. If the autumn wheat be sown in spring, it yields no seed; it is unable to change its habit and to yield seed, like a short-lived annual, two or three months after sowing. Acclimatising is one of the modifications of habit which occur in the course of time, but it is found by experience that this is a change which takes place slowly;

the habit of plants in this respect is peculiarly inelastic. Sir Joseph Banks supposed that wheat did not bring its seed to perfection in our climate till hardened to it by repeated sowings. Spring wheat from Guzerat, sown in England with barley in spring, eared and blossomed; but few of the ears brought more than three or four grains to perfection; some were wholly without corn. Probably in this and in other cases of acclimatisation, the plant, though brought direct from a tropical region, was in fact a native of a colder climate, and soon resumed its original habit. It is the habit of some plants to blossom at the low temperature of our winter months, and to ripen their seeds in March. The ivy-leaved speedwell, which blossoms and seeds during spring and early summer, had seeds full-sized and fast maturing, on March 6th, 1869. The period of flowering, the temperature at which seeds and fruits ripen, the amount of moisture and heat required to make seeds vegetate, and the time of rest—all are determined by hereditary habit.

The peculiarities of plants in affecting different soils and climates have been the means of clothing the surface of the earth with the varied forms of vegetable life. Plants, like animals, differ much in the flexibility of their constitutional powers, and habits of life. Mr. Darwin points out that "an innate wide flexibility of constitution is common to most animals." Man is the principal witness to this fact. The rat and mouse have also a wide range, living under the cold climate of the Faroe and Falkland islands, and on many islands in the torrid zone. The elephant and rhinoceros, which are now tropical or sub-tropical in their habits, were once capable of enduring a glacial climate. The goose has the most inflexible of organisations; he cackles upon the common, and hisses at the traveller's heels, generation after generation, changing only from white to black and white, and altering a little in size according to the quantity of oats and barley-meal he receives with his grass and water. The pigeon, that pretty fancy bird, is extremely flexible, and has been the object of high art. Plants are less flexible than animals, as a rule; but there are exceptions. The English crab, and that of Siberia, are a single species, breeding readily together, though so different in appearance and in time of coming into leaf and blossom; the great variation in their appearance has been the effect of climate on successive generations. The aloe is an example of an inflexible plant. It is a native of a sub-tropical country and impatient of frost, and it is unable to stand forcing. It requires a greenhouse, but dies in a hothouse. Geraniums, too, when forced by artificial means in spring, in order to produce shoots for cuttings, will only bear a very gentle heat. Yet the maidenhair fern, a native of Britain, rejoices in the heat and moisture of a stove, where it grows rapidly to a great size. Adaptation to any special climate is a quality readily grafted on the constitution of an animal, but not on that of a vegetable.

There is one plant which seldom wanders far from the shores of the Mediterranean. Its special habitat is on the southern slopes of the Atlas, called by the Arabs "the land of dates." It is found in the Syrian desert and eastward to the bank of the Euphrates and Tigris. Byron notices its habit, thus :

More blest each palm that shades those plains
Than Israel's scatter'd race,
For, taking root, it there remains
In solitary grace:
It cannot quit its place of birth,
It will not live in other earth.

These qualities in plants and the artificial bending of them in the required direction, have been the means by which the horticulturist has adorned our gardens, and by which the chief modifications in plants and fruits, in shape, colour, and flavour, have been produced. The crab has been changed into the golden pippin, the almond into the peach and nectarine, the sloe into the greengage plum. Andrew Knight, author of Knight's marrowfat peas, was a horticultural magician who practised this interesting art with great success. We will conclude by stating how he went to work to improve the red currant and strawberry. He planted slips of the first in very rich mould, trained the plants to a South wall, crossed red and white together, sowed the seeds in a forcing-house to expedite matters, and so got a great variety of plants bearing fruit which proved to be mild, sweet, and large. He tried endless experiments on strawberries, planting strawberries in rich soil, crossing together the pine, the Chili, the scarlet and the wild strawberry of Canada. At one time his garden contained four hundred varieties. By the most careful, elaborate, and extensive experiments on fruits and vegetables of all kinds, and especially on the apple, this true philosopher and English gentleman, became the greatest of improvers in the department of horticulture and the garden. His example has been followed by many breeders of plants and animals whose patient labours are often unrequited and unknown, but are certainly not unfelt by the community.

THE INDIAN RIVER.

FROM the mountains covered with eternal snow to the ocean basking in the rays of the tropical sun flows Gunga, the river. By Mahomedan mosque and palace; by Hindoo temple and serai; by European factory and English guardhouse; while all around is ever shifting; while men and manners come and go; while those that to-day cool their parched throats, or lave their weary limbs, or sport in idleness in its cool and limpid stream, to-morrow float helpless on its bosom, hewn down by the sword of the invading warrior, or victims of a cruel superstition; unchanged since history began, the river flows on unchanging still. Now bearing the rich goods of nature's Eastern storehouse; now made subservient to

the machinery of Western civilisation; stained with the dye of indigo, or red with the blood of the slaughtered; laughing with tiny ripple in the warm sunshine, or rough and tempest-tossed by the wild cyclone; now creeping gently in the middle of its bed far away from the banks its course has worn away in the lapse of centuries; now roaring and rushing on, like a second deluge, and covering all around at the same time with fertility and desolation; now gleaming with the rude weapons, the gaudy trappings of some proud Mahomedan prince; now giving passage to a conquering band of fair-haired, white-skinned warriors; slave of many masters, bestowing its inestimable favours on all; thus flows Gunga, pre-eminently The River.

The Ganges, as it is commonly called, takes its rise in the Himalaya mountains, issuing from a low cavern, beneath a huge mass of ice, that, somewhat resembling in shape the head of a cow, is by some supposed to have given rise to the veneration in which that animal is held by the Hindoos. That the basin which the water has formed at this point is not the real source of the river, is a matter upon which most persons are agreed; but it has yet to be determined what stream or streams may in justice lay claim to the parentage of the sacred river. The honour is aspired to by two that rise on the north side of the mountains, in the neighbouring country of Thibet, as also by several others that have their sources within the mountains themselves; but whatever or wherever its real fountain-head, the spot in question has for so many ages borne the distinction, that a village has sprung up in its immediate neighbourhood for the accommodation of the pilgrims, who flock yearly, though in steadily diminishing numbers, from all parts of India to bathe in the holy fount. This village, by name Gangoutri, is a small place, inhabited only by those who gain a livelihood by the sale of the holy water, by providing lodging and refreshment for the pilgrims, or by presiding over the performance of their solemn rites.

Leaving Gangoutri, the river winds its way by many devious paths southward through the district of Gurhwal, overshadowed by snow-capped, inhospitable mountains, home of the eagle and wild goat. This tract is wild and beautiful, but desolate, abounding in striking and majestic scenery, but neither populous nor much traversed. At length the Ganges pierces its rocky barriers, and through a narrow opening forces its way into the plains. On this spot stands Hurdwar, the scene of the celebrated fair or melah, and, with its domes and bathing places, its gay flags and varied architecture, and, above all, with the beauty of the limpid stream that flows through its very streets, forms an object of romantic loveliness that favours not a little its claims to peculiar holiness. The river at this point is of no great width, and the confined nature of the locality, with its jutting rocks and intercepting hills, has on more than one occasion caused the death of several of the enthusiastic votaries, who, at the moment indicated by the astronomers, press forward to

plunge into the sacred stream. No other festival is so numerously attended as is this fair. The crowds which resort to Allahabad or Benares are far outnumbered by those which twice a year flock to Hurdwar. Many days before the festival, the roads leading to the spot are thronged with crowds of people. Long lines of hackeries and native waggons filled with muslins, gauzes, silks, and woollen stuffs; of camels, groaning under the weight of huge bags filled with apples, peaches, plums, grapes, and figs; of cows and bullocks, tottering beneath great sacks of grain; women chattering and squabbling, labouring under the burdens their husbands disdain to bear, or squatted on the tops of the packs of merchandise, keeping watch and ward over the household utensils that adorn the pile; children, naked to the skin, toddling by their sides, or resting on the waggons; men, holding arguments in stentorian tones, or screaming shrilly at some unfortunate yoke of oxen that has managed for the hundredth time to fix the wheel of the ghari in the tenacious mud of the road; all, amid a perfect Babel of sounds, groan, pant, and toil onwards, in their endeavours to arrive first. The beggar by the roadside thinks the golden age is come again, buxheesh and food are so plentiful. The sick and the dying are almost envied, so blessed are they accounted in being near to the great watery highway that is to lead them direct to heaven. Those who, after selling all they had, have toiled on foot many hundreds of miles to render their homage at Gunga's shrine, are treated with peculiar veneration. Those who are about to take a leading part in the approaching ceremonies, or on whom devolves the duty of ordering and arranging the vast assembly, pass among the crowd, encircled with a halo of reverence and awe. So, when the long expected day comes round, the favoured spot and its whole neighbourhood are brilliant and bright with the busy throng. The temples are filled with anxious devotees, eager to render themselves fitted to receive the fullest extent of sanctity which the river is capable of according; the streets are almost impassable with hurrying crowds. The meadows round the town, and every open space, are bright with garments and trappings of many brilliant colours. Long lines of low tents stretch away on all sides, each canvas covering sheltering from the rays of the burning sun an excited merchant, clamouring to the passers-by to purchase his wares. Hindoos and Mahomedans of every class jostle one another with a magnanimous disregard of the ordinary differences of nationality and caste; Cashmerians with long black hair, their bodies enveloped in numerous dirty rags; men from Thibet, and half-savages from Gurhwal; representatives of every neighbouring hill tribe, scarcely distinguishable one from another by any fashion save that of their hair; all are for once in their lives jumbled together without any respect to social standing. Here tumblers and jugglers are practising their tricks; fakeers seated on their mats under the shade of a tree are proclaiming their virtues aloud, and receiving very

substantial tokens of the approval of their audiences; bargains are being struck with as much greediness and zeal as if the whole end and business of the meeting were buying and selling; horses and tats are being ridden or led up and down for the satisfaction of cautious bidders; business in all shapes rages throughout the place. When the sun enters Aries, and the waters of the sacred river attain their greatest sanctity, all mundane affairs are carefully put aside for the time, and all present hasten to the river. So by degrees the professed object of the melah, immersion in the river, is, with its attendant feasting, accomplished. Business regains the upper hand, and, with consciences set at rest, the crowds plunge with greater eagerness than before into the din and bewilderment of traffic.

The Ganges now flows onward through a plain on which it sheds countless fruits and flowers. For twelve hundred miles it winds down the slow descent, until, at a distance from Hurdwar, equal to little more than half its navigable length, it discharges its swollen waters through a hundred mouths into the Bay of Bengal. Except where its progress, half way to the sea, is arrested by the concluding links of the chain of the Vindhya Mountains, it flows through an unbroken champagne country, gentle undulations here and there alone breaking the monotony of the dull and boundless flat. Any one travelling from Calcutta to Lahore cannot fail to be impressed with the conviction that the land has once reposed beneath some mighty ocean, whose waters have retired, and left behind a rich alluvial deposit to fertilise the new-sprung waste. But in truth the Ganges is the unknown sea, and the alluvial deposit the product of her agency; for when the snows have begun to melt, and the rains to fall, the river for three months pours itself out over the land. In Bengal proper, or rather in Lower Bengal, when the Brahmapootra, flowing in a nearly parallel course, and swollen in a similar manner by the rain and snow, sends out its floods to meet those of the sacred Ganges, the water extends across the country for more than a hundred miles. Along its whole course the river is lined for miles around with the richest and most luxuriant vegetation. In the more northern districts, at the foot of the Himalayas, are forests of beautiful and valuable woods; and along the northern banks fields of wheat wave incessantly, and wildernesses of tall sugar-cane are met with everywhere. Further south, wheat and barley give way to cotton, to the red and white poppy, to indigo, and, above all, to the much-prized paddy. Harvests fall before the sickle of the reaper twice a year, in some parts three times. Plantains or bananas, dates, cocoanuts, and mangoes, grow all along the stream; and animals of every kind, from the royal tiger to the timid hare, drink of its wave. The deer and the wild boar are found in certain parts, and the lion has recently been hunted near its stream. Bears, jackals, panthers, leopards, wild cats, hyenas, monkeys, and baboons, are common.

Partridges and snipes, herons and storks, swarm on its banks; peacocks, green parrots, jays, minors, and every variety of beautiful and richly-coloured bird infest its jungles. Crocodiles may still be found in its lower branches, on the low-lying lands of the Delta, whose marshy surface teems with venomous and destructive reptile and animal life.

Let us glance cursorily at the principal towns and places of interest which lie on the banks of the Ganges, content to notice and remember only the more salient features of those monuments of India's native greatness.

Futtyghur, the first that calls for remark, is a small and ordinary-looking place, little calculated by its outward appearance to attract our attention, but nevertheless both memorable and worthy of notice, for having on two occasions done good service to the English crown. The fort, which stands on the west bank of the river, has twice sheltered a small band of British subjects from the fury of the turbulent natives; firstly, in the year 1805, when the English power was but newly founded in Upper India; and secondly, in the mutiny of 1857. On the first occasion, Holkar, with a mighty army of Mahratta chiefs, was ravaging the Upper Provinces, and threatening extermination to the white-skinned intruders. Lord Lake had taken the field against him. Holkar, profiting by experience, would not be brought to bay. No sooner did Lake steal down upon his camp, than the sleeper was up and away, scouring off with his light-footed warriors far beyond the reach of Lake's troops. Holkar laid siege to Delhi, with the object of getting possession of the person of the Great Mogul, and of so being able to dictate his own terms to the foreigners whom he could not prevent sharing in the booty. Colonels Ouchterlony and Burn gallantly defended the fort, and Holkar, catching sight of the indomitable Lake creeping down upon his rear over the hills that surround the city, raised the siege, broke up his camp, and marched, leaving the Mogul and the city both in the hands of the English. He next determined to lay waste the rich towns and country of the Doab, but Lake tarried not a moment in hastening after him. Holkar, however, outstripped the English, and the latter had the satisfaction of coming up with nothing but burnt and plundered towns. At length Holkar halted near Furruckabad, thinking that he had put a sufficient distance between himself and his pursuers to justify his resting for a while. But he reckoned without his host. Lake heard of his halting, and, though weary with a long march, determined not to stay a moment to refresh his troops, but to push over the intervening space of thirty miles, swoop down upon him in the night, and bring the campaign to a summary termination. Lake did so, surprised his camp, and totally routed his whole force. The victory accomplished, Lake pushed on to Futtyghur, distant about three miles, and was just in time to save the English residents at that station from the natives, who, *confident of the success of their countryman,*

had set fire to the bungalows, and forced the Europeans, together with a company of sepoys, to seek shelter in the fort.

On the second occasion of the fort's doing duty as a place of shelter and defence to the English, it resisted for three days the efforts of a large force of mutineers, who, encamped around its walls, were endeavouring to reduce to submission the heroic little band of English within. Cut off from their friends, unable to hold communication with any one outside, ill-provided with food, shelter, or accommodation, scarce able to work the few guns they possessed, or to keep up a proper show of strength and numbers to deceive and intimidate the besiegers, the little garrison held out for that time. But where the foe could not enter, death and sickness stole in; hunger prevailed, and the alternative of starvation or capitulation began to stare them in the face. So they left the fort on the third night, gained the river unobserved, and embarking in boats, made their way safely to Cawnpore. This redoubtable little fort is a simple construction, not even so dignified in appearance as the generality of fortifications, which surround almost every village in the Upper Provinces. The latter are built of brick, whereas the fort of Futtyghur is built of nothing better than baked clay. It now forms the residence of an agent of the English Government, who superintends the gun-foundry which has been erected within it, as also the making of tents, for the manufacture of which Futtyghur is very celebrated.

Cawnpore stands a little way below Futtyghur on the same (the west) bank of the river. The story of this town is but too-well known. No likeness of the spot, which has become so cruelly memorable, remains now to enable us to trace the details of that awful night. The huts, from which the oil lamps shed a lurid and fitful glare on the dying as they were dragged past to their loathsome tomb; the roads, whose dust was stained with English blood, have disappeared entirely; and the very well itself, from which many a thirsty traveller and many a thrifty housewife drew the grateful water in days gone by, but whose spring on that dreadful night ran red with blood, is no longer recognisable. A space of several acres round the well has been enclosed by an iron railing, planted with leafy trees, and adorned with beds of flowers. This enclosure is neatly kept; and, screened by its thick hedge, impervious to the curious and inquisitive gaze, forms a pleasant and retired spot. Dark cypress trees are planted in all directions over its verdant turf, making even nature appear to mourn over the past. Over the well has been raised a gently-sloping hillock, surmounted by an octagonal carved stone screen about sixteen feet high, passing through which by a trellised gate of iron we find ourselves standing on the top of a flight of shallow stone-steps, which, running round the inside of the screen, lead down to the monument over the well. The mouth, about five feet in diameter, has been closed in,

and a pedestal, about three feet high, placed over it, on the top of which stands the figure of an angel bound to a tree. The remains of those discovered in the well, after the recapture of the town by our troops, are buried in a small plot of consecrated ground, railed off within the garden, not twenty yards distant from the well itself.

So we glide along by the eastern shore of the Doab, the rich land lying between the Jumna and the Ganges, and at length reach its southernmost extremity; where, on a narrow tongue of land, formed by the junction of the two rivers, the fort of Allahabad raises its battlemented walls. This fort is a triangular construction, one side guarding the Jumna, another the Ganges, and the third looking northward over the plains of the Doab. It is a handsome and commanding building, its walls of rich red freestone forming a pleasing contrast to the verdure of the surrounding country, and to the bright waters of the rivers that flow beneath. It was a favourite residence of Akber's, but its interior presents no striking memorials of oriental magnificence or luxury, no beautiful palaces or remarkable rooms. From the point of confluence of the two rivers, the vast tubular bridge of the East Indian Railway may be seen spanning the stream. The greatness of this work, the enterprise of those who projected and carried it out, the enormous difficulties to be overcome in the shifting bed of the river, render this bridge one of the most noticeable objects in the neighbourhood. Allahabad is a spot much visited by pilgrims, being one of the most celebrated prayagas, or confluences of rivers, in India. It is said that here the Ganges, the Jumna, and the Sereswati unite their waters: an assertion which the devout Hindoo supports, by explaining that the latter river, which is entirely invisible, and of which no traces can be discovered either in the neighbourhood or in the pages of history, flows underneath the ground, and rises at the point where the other two meet.

The river, which has hitherto been running in a south-easterly direction, now meets the Vindhya Mountains, and, turning due east, forms between this point and Bhagulpoore a magnificent reach, studded with most important and flourishing towns, and adorned with the most valued crops that grow upon its banks. Here it is that the indigo plant and the poppy deck the fields with their dark green leaves, and their white and scarlet flowers. Here, too, in some favoured spots, gardens of roses load the air with their sweet perfume. About sixty miles from Allahabad the river makes a bend, and on the northern or outer side of the circle the ancient town of Benares looks down. The appearance of this town, as seen from the river, is most striking. Mosques, with delicate minarets towering to the sky; temples, with domes surmounting walls of varied hues and quaint architecture; street rising above street on the sloping bank of the river, whose waters lave the stone-built houses, picturesquely covered with luxuriant creepers; ghats, with flights of broad

and shallow steps; boats, heavily laden, passing and repassing on the stream; natives, with their various and richly coloured garments, flitting in and out among the buildings; the whole scene tempered by the dark green foliage that, sprinkled here and there throughout the town, betokens the residences of the wealthier inhabitants; all these things, seen under the rich light of a tropical sun, form a scene of great interest and beauty. Benares is a place of considerable sanctity, and is visited by immense numbers of pilgrims. The numerous attendance of these persons, all bent on acquiring by acts of charity and almsgiving the favour of their gods and ministers, fills the town with beggars, who, squatted at the sides of the narrow streets, utter a perpetual wail of lamentation, and weary the traveller with importunate cries for alms. But Benares may claim pre-eminence over the other cities of the Ganges in another point. With the exception of Calcutta, it is the most advanced seat of learning in Bengal, boasting no less than six native colleges, the largest of which numbers more than six hundred scholars. Patna is another of the large towns lining the banks of the river in this part of its course. It is the chief town of the fertile district of Bahar, the centre of the indigo, cotton, and opium trades, and the great mart for the collection and sale of those valuable commodities. It is a flourishing and busy place, and, with its outlying suburbs, stretching for nine miles along the river, presents an imposing front. Mirzapoor and Ghazeepoor, on either side of Benares, are two other large and flourishing towns. The former is a great cotton mart, and at the latter is a branch of the government stud. It was at Ghazeepoor that the Marquis Cornwallis died, when on his way from Calcutta to the Upper Provinces, only three months after his arrival in Bengal. His remains are interred in a large mausoleum, built of stone dug from the adjacent quarries of Chunar. This portion of the river formed the chief scene of the movements of the British forces in 1763, when Meer Cossim Ali, in the absence from India of Lord Clive, who had set him on his throne, and during the maladministration of affairs by those who had been left at their head in Calcutta, attempted to throw off his allegiance to his English patrons. It was in that year that the adventurer Summers, German, Dutchman, or devil, who was known by the natives as Somro, and who was the right-hand man of the rebel nabob, superintended the massacre of one hundred and fifty English in Patna; thereby giving to that town a terrible notoriety, which has in later years been rivalled by the story of "the little house of Arrah," a town in the immediate vicinity. The country to the south, that here interrupts the river in its direct progress to the sea for the space of four hundred miles, is hilly rather than mountainous, its height nowhere exceeding six hundred feet. It is inhabited by mountaineers, or hillmen, who, of hardy and warlike habits, and almost inaccessible in their rocky strongholds, have

been a continual source of annoyance, not only to the English Government, but also to the people of the country. It was not until twenty years ago that they were effectually put down by our troops, and forced into acquiescence in the laws that were introduced among them. Even now their territory is but little visited, and the Sothalees, as they call themselves, are mightily astonished at the intrusion into their wild fastnesses of a white-faced Englishman. In some parts this highland juts out upon the river, looking down upon it from a dizzy height, and forming posts easy to be defended. Among these natural strongholds, the fortress of Chunar must be mentioned as the most remarkable. Of all the fortified places that command the navigation of the Ganges, it may justly be said to be second in point of strength only to Allahabad and the modern fortification of Fort William. It stands in the neighbourhood of Benares, on the summit of a large rock, which rises for several hundred feet almost perpendicularly out of the stream. The renowned Warren Hastings once found shelter within its walls, having been obliged to flee from Benares, in fear of the fanaticism and hostility of the natives. Buxar, a little lower down the stream, is another natural fortification, standing on the brow of a hill overlooking the river. Monghir, too, another hill fort, on the other side of Patna, is a place which by the natural eligibility of its position tempted Meer Cossim to choose it as his rallying point in 1763.

Passing the large civil station of Bhaugulpore, and stealing round the base of the Vindhya Mountains, the Ganges, now swollen by the waters of four large rivers—the Goomtee, the Gogra, the Soane, and the Gunduck—turns once more to the south-east, and at the end of another hundred and fifty miles reaches Moorshedabad. This city was once the capital of Hindostan, and remained the seat of the nabob when the English town of Calcutta had usurped its imperial pre-eminence. It is a place of no great magnificence, its site having been chosen rather for the command it possessed over the traffic on the river, than for its beauty or natural healthiness. The palace is an insignificant building, a mere mud hut in comparison with the gorgeous creations of the Mogul emperors in the cities of Upper India. Its walls, however, have witnessed many an exciting scene, momentous in the history of the country. Here it was that the boy-tyrant, Suraj-u-Dowlah, the perpetrator of the tragedy of the black hole, was murdered by the hand or by the immediate order of Meeran, the son of Meer Jaffier, whom Clive had set upon the throne after the battle of Plassey; and here the tragic end of the deception of the wealthy Hindu, Omichund, took place.

At this point the Ganges divides itself into two branches, which form, between themselves and the sea, that part of Bengal which, from its shape, is denominated the Delta. Another branch, narrow and of no great length, but yet important, leaves the main river a little to the north of Moorshedabad, and joins the western-

most of these two branches below that town. This branch is called the Bhagirathi, and is held in much veneration by the natives. On its banks stand several small but important towns, the most considerable of which is Berhampoor, a large civil station situated on the island of Moorshedabad, and adjoining the town of that name. Cossimbazar, a famous mart and emporium for the silk produced in this neighbourhood, often lends its name to distinguish this portion of the river. Close by was fought the battle of Plassey, where Clive determined the destiny of the country. On the night before the battle he obtained a large quantity of rice, sufficient to supply his whole native army, from the neighbouring town of Cutwa, that, with another of the name of Culna, a little lower down the stream, forms the great river port of the fertile district of Burdwan.

Of the two branches that remain to be described, the eastern branch, which retains the general designation of the river, passes by no place that calls for any notice. But, on one of the streams which, jutting out from it, join the sea still further to the east, stands the town of Dacca, celebrated both in ancient and modern times. The stream on which it is built goes under the denomination of Booree Gunga—that is to say, old Ganges—and centuries ago, before certain changes took place in its course—for the Ganges, with its shifting banks of sand, is continually forming for itself new channels and filling up old ones—was doubtless the principal and main outlet of the river. At the latter end of the seventeenth, and perhaps even so late as the beginning of the last century, Dacca was a place of great splendour and importance. The ruins which surround the modern town testify to its former extent and magnificence, and prove that it must have vied in appearance and in riches with most other Indian cities. The mighty Brahmapootra, rivaling in all but its length the greatness of its sister and close neighbour the Ganges, enters the sea also at this point; and there is thus great reason to suppose that a spot which commanded, as Dacca would have done, the mouths of such sources of inland trade and communication, should have been the site of a great and flourishing town. At the present day Dacca is noted for the excellence of its cotton fabrics, the beauty of its muslins surpassing that of those manufactured in any other part of the world.

The western branch, or Hooghly, after passing its point of junction with the Bhagirathi, and until it reaches the southern extremity of Calcutta, presents an animated and lively picture, full of all the action and the thousand sights and sounds that surround the seat of government. Its banks are lined with thriving towns, busy with trade or luxurious with wealthy inhabitants; its overshadowing woods are interspersed with country seats of rich merchants, whose offices are in Calcutta. The towns of Hooghly, Chinsurah, Chandernagore, Serampoor, and Barrackpoor, are quickly passed, one after another, on opposite sides of the

stream. The first is a large civil station, fashionable and select; at Chinsurah the Dutch East India Company built their first factory in 1656; Chandernagore is a French town, forming a little colony in itself, amenable to different laws from those of the surrounding country, and affording, under its tricolour flag, a place of refuge to the runaway debtors and scamps of Calcutta; Serampoor was the spot chosen as the site of his mission by Dr. Carey, the pioneer of British missionary efforts in Bengal; and Barrackpore, with its pretty park and menagerie, is a favourite place of resort to holiday makers. The houses of the latter town are contiguous to the outskirts of Calcutta, and from thence the sights that crowd upon our view are various and interesting. But we cannot at present do more than enumerate them, and so we pass steadily on. On, past private houses, factories, and native huts; past horrible burning-ghats, where the smoke and stench rise continually from funeral pyres; past crowded and dirty wharves, where piles of goods await removal to the ship, the train, or the warehouse; past lines of crowded shipping, with labouring crews and shouting coolies: past the ghat of the East Indian Railway Company, whose busy little steamer puffs backwards and forwards continually, conveying passengers between Calcutta and the train. On again, past English counting-houses and merchants' offices; on, past the Esplanade, with its public gardens and promenades, and its pretty line of East Indianmen that might well be mistaken for men of war, moored close to the bank; on, past Fort William, past the Maidan, and Calcutta's Rotten-row, the Strand. On, past lines of shipping again; past Kidderpore Docks; past Alleepore, with its villa houses peacefully reposing in beautiful grounds; past Garden Reach, fallen from its suburban celebrity, contaminated by the presence of the ex-King of Oude; past the Botanical gardens and Bishop's College; on, past Calcutta, native, mercantile, civil, and military; on, past all signs of human habitation, once more alone with the swiftly-flowing stream. Then, the river widening, and retiring with its mud and jungle-covered banks to the verge of the horizon, no other objects meet our gaze but lighthouses and telegraphic stations, until at length the lightship at the Sandheads rises into view, and we remember that the Ganges is no longer with us, but is merged in the boundless sea.

ORPHANHOOD.

The shadow of the forest trees:
My childhood withered 'neath their spell,
In the old home remembered well,
Shadowed by forest trees.

The shadow of the forest trees,
Between me and the clear sky spread,
As I lay waking on my bed,
Shadowed by forest trees.

The shadow of the forest trees:
I wept and struggled for the light,
But all around was black as night,
Shadowed by forest trees.

The shadow of the forest trees
Fell on my heart and on the stream,
Which murmured by without a gleam,
Shadowed by forest trees.

The shadow of the forest trees
Robbed us of Life's enchanting plays;
Both heart and stream were dark always,
Shadowed by forest trees.

The shadow of the forest trees:
We heard of love and of the sun;
But in our gloomy world were none,
Shadowed by forest trees.

The shadow of the forest trees:
One morn they quivered in the blast,
Wild moan'd the storm, and broke, at last,
The shadow of the trees.

The shadow of the forest trees:
'Mid tossing branches struggling through,
I hailed a sky of happy blue,
Unshadowed by the trees.

The shadow of the forest trees
No longer hushed the streamlet's song;
In glad sweet mirth it flowed along,
Unshadowed by the trees.

The shadow of the forest trees
Clouded no more the heaven above;
My heart awoke to happy love,
Unshadowed by the trees.

Alas, alas! the forest trees!
Once more the time grew dark and still,
Murmured no more the poor lone rill,
Shadowed by forest trees.

Alas, alas! the forest trees!
Again they closed around my head,
And love, and hope, and joy were dead,
Shadowed by forest trees.

Alas, alas! the forest trees!
The stream is hushed, the gleam is past;
This heart, wild beating, breaks at last,
Shadowed by forest trees.

The shadow of the forest trees:
Alas! for heart, alas! for stream;
But both have had one blessed gleam,
Unshadowed by the trees.

Despite the shadow of the trees,
The heart has loved, the stream has sung;
Now let their mournful knell be rung,
Shadowed by forest trees.

THE GROWTH OF THE BAR.

"UNDER the law of nature and of Moses there were no lawyers" (avocats), says Boucher d'Argis, in his Short History of the Order—or, as he goes on to explain, "no class of persons professionally appointed to defend the interests of others." Under the Mosaic dispensation, men pleaded their own cause in primitive fashion before the tribunals; and such, for many ages, was the simple rule of advocacy. Recent events have seemed to favour the supposition, that the primitive system is reviving amongst us, the appearance of Miss Shedden before the House of Lords, with her father "to follow on the same side," having something Mosaic in its nature. We know that, in those old days, a man might bring down

his relations and friends to back his cause in court; and it is our consolation to feel that there would have been nothing in that system to prevent the lady's uncle and cousins, had they been so minded, from claiming a hearing after herself and her father, and so extending the twenty-five days of that memorable hearing to an inappreciable length. The case of Dr. Thom, too, threatened at one time, to the eternal scandal of our law, to afford another instance of the same kind. Most thankful may we be that the danger has been averted, and that one of the gravest and most momentous inquiries of modern times is not to be converted into an encounter of wits between an unaccustomed layman and a strong bar of trained and skilful advocates. The public attention thus directed to these cases, however, it may not be without some interest to trace, as briefly as may be, something of the rise and history of the professional advocate, evolving him, as we shall,* chiefly from the interesting and scholar-like pages of Mr. Forsyth's *Hortensius*, a book in which much quaint and various learning on matters connected with the history of the bar is pleasantly collected.

An advocate and a lawyer, though in accordance with common usage we have given the latter sense to D'Argis's "avocat," are two very different people, and legal knowledge may be said, even now, to be more an accident than the foundation of an advocate's training. It belongs to him, as a smattering of all knowledge belongs to him, as matter for the exercise of his powers of talk. All that Cato required of the advocate was, that he should be "a good man skilled in talking;" and, the element of goodness more or less modified by circumstances, such the eminent *nisi prius* barrister very much remains. In Athens and at Rome, until some period difficult to fix, advocacy and law were things apart. Athens, indeed, had no lawyers properly so called, unless we seek them in the "logographers," who wrote and composed the speeches that were to be delivered in court by others; and, at Rome, the *jurisconsults*, and the "prudentes," the "procuratores," and the "cognitores," chamber-lawyers as we should call them now, were not given to practise in the forum—the first recorded instance of the appearance of one of them in that capacity having resulted in disastrous failure. One

Scævola, the wisest jurist of his time, took on himself to argue a will case, as, with some confidence, he might, seeing that it turned entirely on a point of law, against his learned friend *Crassus*, who boasted of much eloquence, but no law. And *Crassus* won, probably because he was put up to his points by some one as good as *Scævola*, or that he knew more than he allowed, while in the matter of speaking he had it all his own way. *Cicero* was wont to assert that he knew no law, but that in three days he could make himself as good as any *jurisconsult* of them all; but in comment on the silly boast, we may read *Niebuhr's* acute criticism, that, though he may have had no scientific view of the law, he had probably very sufficient practical knowledge of it. In the difference between the practical and the scientific knowledge lies the distinction between the advocate and the lawyer.

But if it is right that we, for our present purpose, should not confound the lawyer and the advocate, to the world, which much affects generalities, especially when abusive, a lawyer is a lawyer, and there is an end of him. And a pleasant time the lawyers have had of it from the laity, since *Lucian* first began to gird at the "clever fellows ready to burst themselves for a three-obol fee," and *Juvenal* let loose the flood-gates of his magnificent abuse upon the hapless head of the barrister.

Men of your large profession, who could speak
To every cause, and things mere contraries,
Till they were hoarse again, yet all be law.

So wise, so grave, of so perplexed a tongue,
And loud withal, that could not wag, nor scarce
Lie still, without a fee.

So writes rare Ben Jonson of the profession that *Gulliver* further describes as "bred up in the art of proving, by words multiplied for the purpose, that white is black and black is white, according as they are paid; but in all points out of their own trade usually the most stupid and ignorant generation among us."

"Pray tell me," says a brilliant French writer, "where I am to find an advocate with principles;" and *Racine*, in *Les Plai-deurs*, has the pleasant passage:

Vous en ferez, je crois, d'excellents avocats:
Ils sont fort ignorants.

Perhaps on these lines may have been based a certain eminent barrister's reported estimate of his own qualifications, when attributing his success to "unbounded assurance, popular manners, and total ignorance of law."

* It is as well, nowadays, to add, with the sanction and kind assistance of the author.

Sir Thomas More would have no lawyers in his Utopia, as a "sort of people whose profession it is to disguise matters as well as wrest laws;" but the plan of dispensing with them was not infallible, for we may learn from Milton's account of the Russians of his time, who "had no lawyers," that they found, nevertheless, that "justice by corruption of inferiors was much perverted."

The lawyers have had their friends, though chiefly among their own numbers. Cicero knew nothing in the world "so royal, liberal, and generous" as the advocate's art. And "what," says a quaint old Englishman, Davys, "is the matter and subject of our profession but justice, the lady and queen of all moral virtues?" But readers who want lofty estimates of the work and mission of the bar, may turn to the lawyers of France, where the "*noblesse de la robe*" ever claimed and held conspicuous rank. Let us content ourselves with the definition of D'Aguessan, who calls his brethren "an order as old as the magistracy, as noble as virtue, as necessary as justice;" and with this simple and effective parry of M. Jules le Berquier, in his recently published book, *Le Barreau Moderne*, from which we shall beg leave to quote more freely presently: "From the stage," he says, "the world has long cast its harmless darts at the bar, which has laughed at them and not suffered." It amuses the world and does not hurt the bar.

When and where was the origin of the advocate, it is impossible with preciseness to say. D'Argis is right in saying that "his function is older than his name." For the name, in its present application, dates back no earlier than Imperial Rome. Originally, the "*advocatus*" was the friend who attended to give an accused man the support of his presence on his trial, a sort of witness to character: the advocate of old Rome had no name but "orator." When he became a profession he got many names; his most complimentary title being of the middle ages, when he was in some countries called "*clamator*," which D'Argis civilly refers to a Celtic root, "*clain*," signifying "suit;" but for which malevolence will suggest a more obvious meaning. As for the function, a writer from whom Le Berquier quotes calls it "contemporary with the first law-suit and the first court," but not with strict correctness. There never was a country without law-suits: there have been and are countries without advocates. In Turkey, for instance, there are none now.

Advocacy is, in fact, says M. le Berquier, the growth of liberty; and the bar, a body of men springing up in a free country, self-born and self-governed, called into gradual existence by the gradually increasing complication of social relations, till out of the rude speakers who pleaded their own cause before the Mosaic tribunals, grew the barristers of the present day. Where there has been freedom, there have been advocates, even in the forests of old Germany: without it there are none. The orators of Greece, according to Cicero, were to be sought in Athens only. Athens alone, adds M. le Berquier, had free institutions. Advocacy, according to the theory of this ingenious writer, is the result and the corollary of what he calls the "right of defence," and grows and flourishes only where, and in proportion as, that natural and indefeasible right is acknowledged. In Rome, in the republican days, "the bar" had, perhaps, no distinct and recognised existence; but advocacy and eloquence flourished in the highest degree. Under the empire, the bar was a body at once supported and restrained by a long line of imperial ordinances, but the eloquence of advocacy was a thing of the past. Such is a brief outline of M. le Berquier's philosophy; but as our touch of the subject must of necessity be light, we must refer those who are tempted to study it at length to the author's pages, which will well repay a careful perusal.

Whatever the true philosophy of the matter may be, to Athens we must look for the earliest records of the advocate's eloquence, speaking, not in his own cause, but in that of others. Of the excessive fondness of the Athenians for judicial proceedings, and the attraction that the seats of the dicasts (jury-box and bench in one) had for that excitable people, Aristophanes has left us an undying record in his comedy of the *Wasps*, from which Racine "adapted" his far less amusing *Plaideurs*. But, elaborate as their system was, we are at a loss for any certain clue to the principles on which the advocacy of causes, all important as it was in a country where Hyperides could get a verdict and a judgment in the pretty Phryne's favour by the simple but peculiar method recorded in Gerome's picture, was conducted in the courts of the *Areopagus*. That the right of addressing the judges was not confined to the immediate parties to the suit, is clear; but it is equally clear that an orator could not obtain a hearing when he was a stranger to the client and the cause. Some personal interest in one

or the other would seem to have been the necessary qualification. An instance of the first was the appearance of Tisagras in behalf of his brother Miltiades, who, being himself too ill to speak, was carried into court on a litter; of the last, the famous speech of Demosthenes, "De Coronâ," in defence of Ctesiphon, who was accused of having illegally proposed to present the orator with a golden crown. One other class of cases there was, in which, to judge from Lucian, litigants were allowed professional assistance—when they were too drunk to speak for themselves.

A peculiar class at Athens were the logographers—men who devoted themselves to composing speeches which were afterwards delivered in court by others, after the fashion of our courts-martial. In this way Demosthenes himself was at first employed. He wrote one for Phormio, which all his relations came to court in a body to deliver. It began with an apology for Phormio's notorious incompetency to make a speech for himself. In this case Demosthenes further signalled himself by writing the speech for the other side also: a feat which recalls the ingenious essayist, who, on a reward being offered to the writer who should upset certain arguments in a startling controversial pamphlet of his which had just appeared, wrote another and answered them himself. One of the most celebrated of logographers was Antiphon, who deserves an immortality for good or evil for having been the first lawyer who took money for his work. Among its great discoverers, the world should not forget the inventor of fees. The practice of fee-taking extended rapidly, as was not unnatural, among the speakers of speeches as well as the writers; and once treated as the legitimate means of turning an honest obol, advocacy may be fairly said to have entered upon a recognised professional existence.

If this discovery of Antiphon's was an epoch in advocacy, the leading case of Phryne, already cited, marked another. After her trial it appears to have occurred with some force to the authorities that there might have been a miscarriage of justice, and that it seemed scarcely reasonable or judicial to acquit a young lady of a charge of impiety because she looked so well with nothing on. Her case, therefore, led to the passing of the first recorded law that limited the discretion and regulated the conduct of advocates, who in later times, especially in Rome under the em-

pire, and afterwards in France, were frequently subjected, both as to their duties and their privileges, to legislative interference of this kind. In England, as is well known, the bar is governed by its own rules only, being a body as irresponsible as it was in its origin indefinite: a very dignified position, no doubt, and one which squares well with M. le Berquier's theory. But the curious in the secrets of the prison-house might find in some of the mischievous and puerile regulations of the code that the lawyers have constructed for themselves, on the simple principle of mutual mistrust, reason to doubt whether they are a class whom it is advisable to leave altogether to themselves. This is not the place, however, to discuss the ethics of legal trades-unionism. The law which grew out of Phryne's case was simple and effective. All oratorical tricks, calculated to move pity or indignation, were forbidden; and the judges were enjoined not to look at the accused during a criminal trial if anything of the kind were attempted. "This rule," says D'Argis, "did much chill the eloquence of the Greek orators." Speakers were also ordered to confine themselves within the bounds of modesty; not to attempt to gain the private ear of the judges; *not to raise the same point twice*; to refrain from abusive language, and from stamping of the feet; not to speak to the judges when considering their judgment; and not to make a noise on leaving the court, or collect a crowd round them. Fifty drachmas was the lowest penalty for disobedience to any of these rules, some of which, in their primitive simplicity, might have been framed for a pack of unruly schoolboys, while others would be invaluable even at the present day. We may compare with them, in more modern times, a series of rules prescribed for the guidance of the "advocates of parliament" in the time of Philip the Fair. They were warned not to undertake just and unjust causes without distinction, or support their arguments by fallacies or misquotations; not to abuse the opposite party or his counsel; *not to be absent from court when their cause was called on* (mark that, ye Q.C.'s); not to be disrespectful to the court, or greedy of fees. Finally, they were not to lead immoral lives, or (these were the days of chivalry) refuse their services to the poor and oppressed. From an old book called the *Stylus Parliamenti* the advocate may get yet more valuable hints; for he will

there learn that he must have an imposing presence, a graceful figure, and a smiling face; that he must be modest in manner and respectful in attitude, in dress neither a dandy nor a sloven; that he must not bite his lips while he is speaking, must use appropriate action, and not talk too loud or too low.

To recur to the advocates of Athens: another important restriction imposed on them at the same period was that which limited the time for which the "good man skilled in talking" was allowed to occupy the court. This was the famous clepsydra, or water-clock (or rather water-glass), which ran its course in three hours, at the close whereof, unless the speaker had obtained a part of the water of another pleader engaged in the cause (a permitted practice), he was forced to conclude his address, whether he had sufficiently perorated or no.

Bearing in mind that all speeches in those days were carefully prepared beforehand, we may imagine with what anxiety the orator would rehearse his speech in his study at home, and "cut" it (to borrow the language of the stage) to the prescribed length by the aid of a private water-glass. That the limitation was rather trying sometimes, we know from Demosthenes, who in one of his speeches complains of the impossibility of going through the whole of a heavy case "in the same water." But it was found so useful, that the water-clock was introduced at Rome so late as the second consulship of Pompey: with this improvement, however, that the amount of time allotted to each speaker varied in each case in proportion to its nature, and was fixed beforehand by the judge. In France, in 1413, an ordinance of Charles the Sixth charged counsel on their oaths and allegiance "to be brief in their statements," but we never find any special limit assigned. The clergy here in England at one time always took an hour-glass into their pulpits—a very fair allowance, all things considered—but the bar have never hampered their eloquence with any salutary restrictions of time. How often, at Westminster or Guildhall, when a persistent advocate *will*, to borrow a suggestive phrase we have heard, "keep on keep-on-ing," for hours in a case on which judge and jury and everybody in court have made up their minds long ago—partly because his own voice is sweeter to him than that of others, and partly, maybe, because of a mysterious tradition which prevails that "the attorneys

like it"—does he who is to open the next case look wearily at the clock, and wish that it were of water. How fondly, worried as he was *almost* out of his usual courteous urbanity, must the Lord Chancellor have thought of the "clepsydra" on the morning of Miss Shedden's twenty-fifth day!

Professional advocacy in ancient Rome had its beginnings in the perplexing relation between the patron and the client, which, as it puzzled Niebuhr himself, no one else can be fairly expected to understand. Such, at least, is the popular theory, though M. le Berquier combats it on the ground that the patron was a feudal institution, that the bar was free in its essence, and that nothing feudal ever produced freedom in any form. Be this as it may, one of the duties of the patron certainly was to "appear for his clients in court, and to expound the law to them, civil and pontifical;" and we may easily imagine that as the law became more complicated, the latter duty was somewhat difficult for men who only took advocacy in the Forum as one of the accidents of a public life. Hence arose the class of "jurisconsulti," who made a profession of the delivery of legal opinions, like the Pundits of India, and a class yet more scientific than they, the "Prudentes," whose opinions had in themselves the force of law. The advocate, as in the pre-Antiphonic period at Athens, received at first no money for his labours; he would as soon have thought of being paid for a speech in the Forum as an M.P. would think of being paid (directly) for a speech in the House. Nor was he therein a loser, for a brilliant speech in the Forum opened at once to a young orator all the distinctions of the Senate and of public life, the legitimate objects of his ambition. But as clients became richer and patrons more busy, presents from the former to the latter, in order to give them an interest in their cases, became the fashion, and so the fee grew, as at Athens, into a recognised institution. It was at first regarded as an abuse, and produced the first legislative interference with the Roman bar in the shape of the Cincian law, which forbade the taking of money for advocacy, but with very little purpose. More and more, as the intricacies of law grew and multiplied, did the arguing of cases, and the acquisition of the necessary knowledge, so absorb the advocate's time, that under the empire we find "the bar" an established profession, and the advocate an individual fact, though, it is to be feared,

a somewhat sorry one. With the untached guerilla character of the early Roman bar, disappears the glory which surrounded it. The history of advocacy under the republic is a brilliant record of great names and great speeches, and the growth of a society untrammelled by any rules save its own. Under the empire it is a perpetual succession of petty ordinances, at first to protect and then to restrain. Juvenal draws a lively picture of the young barrister of his day, and of the luxury and show by which he was forced to ruin himself, in order to keep up appearances and catch clients, and recommends him to leave Rome and practise in Gaul or Africa; much as his poor and ambitious successor of the present day is advised to try India or the colonies rather than waste his substance in enforced idleness, and the expenses entailed by circuit and chambers. As in London so in Rome, the best way to make money at the bar would seem to have been—to leave it!

"There is now no doubt," writes M. le Berquier, "that the Roman bar had a constitution of its own, for a long time subject to no law. Long before the seventh century of the Roman era, the bar, as a body, were under the direction of those common rules and statutes of which Cicero speaks, but these did not emanate from any superior power. It is not probable that these rules were written, or that the bar was an organised body like the College of Augurs. Tradition was long the only law appealed to and recognised, and unity resulted rather from esprit de corps than from the legal existence of the body itself. It was established by the fitness of things, and maintained by usage."

Under the empire, as we have said, the Roman bar loses much of its interest, though we have ample proof that it was held in high esteem by the emperors.

The code of Justinian declared that "advocacy should be remunerated by the highest rewards," and advocates were accordingly exempted from many of the burdens of the ordinary citizen. Their honours were plentiful: emperors themselves are said to have argued cases at the bar. They were treated as on the same footing with the military profession. Anastasius bestowed on retired advocates the title of "clarissimi," and Justinian entitled them an "order." But they were, like Tarpeia, crushed under the golden ornaments, and side by side with these privileges, and soon to supersede them, grew up restrictive laws,

which M. le Berquier deduces as a natural consequence from the growth of despotism, and the losing sight of the "right of defence." It is not worth while, had we the space, to give any detailed account of this petty legislation. Among the various edicts, it is amusing to find one forbidding women to argue any case but their own, in consequence of the troublesome behaviour of "a most wicked virgin," one Afrania, who wearied the court with her importunities. That women in the old days were not excluded from the Roman bar we know from the fame of Hortensia, the daughter of the great advocate Hortensius, who argued so effectively against a "tax on matrons," when the orators of the day declined to undertake their cause, that she procured its remission, in a speech which won high praise from Quintilian. Another noble Roman lady, from the spirit and success with which she defended herself in a suit brought against her, got the name of "Androgyne."

Besides women, blind men were forbidden to practise as advocates, on account of the ridicule caused by one Publius, who, being blind, went on addressing the court for some time after it had risen. Justinian prohibited the clergy from practising, and restrictions on account of religion were numerous. But it is needless to dwell further on this, the most uninteresting period of the history of the bar. In another paper we propose to say something of the functions and doings of the advocates of modern times.

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF JOHN ACKLAND.

A TRUE STORY.

IN THIRTEEN CHAPTERS. CHAPTER II.

AMONG Mr. Cartwright's guests was a young lady who had, or was supposed to have, an extraordinary faculty for describing people's characters or sensations: not by looking at their handwriting, but by holding it in her hand, and thus placing herself (it was averred) in magnetic rapport with the writers. She was a merry, good-natured girl, who did her spiriting gently, without professing much belief in it herself, and always ready to laugh heartily with others at the result whenever (as sometimes happened) it was an unmitigated failure. This evening the experiment had been tried several times with more than usual success; and sundry hypercritical spectators averred that Miss

Simpson had made a great many lucky guesses.

"Well, now," said Cartwright, "that is not fair on Miss Simpson. Here is the writing of a person whom nobody present—not even myself—has ever seen. Miss Simpson shall try again with it, and I will bet you all that she guesses right."

He drew a letter from his pocket, and the young lady, after crumpling it for a moment in her hand, said, hesitatingly,

"This is a woman's writing."

"Right!" said Cartwright.

"A married woman," said Miss Simpson, more boldly.

"Right again. Any children?"

"No."

"Quite right. Married long, eh?"

"About three months, I think."

"Wonderful!" exclaimed Cartwright.

"It is just three months and nine days."

Mr. Ackland looked up, and looked red, and fidgeted in his chair.

"Oh, Cartwright," cried Judge Griffin, "that won't do. You put her leading questions."

"Well, let her go on by herself," said Cartwright.

He had noticed John Ackland's movements and was looking hard at his New England guest. Mr. Ackland blushed again, and turned away his face.

"But she is not happy—no, not at all happy," said Miss Simpson, musingly.

"The devil she's not!" cried Cartwright; "but 'twas a love match, wasn't it?"

"I think so," replied Miss Simpson, after a pause, and doubtfully.

"My withers are unwrung," said Cartwright, looking round. "I swear I never saw the lady in my life."

"Does she care more for somebody else already, ma'am, than for her husband?" asked the judge.

"More, yes," replied Miss Simpson, "much, no. She must be a strange character. Not much feeling for any one, I should say, except for herself. She jilted him."

"Whom?" demanded all the listeners together.

"I don't know. But now I fancy she half regrets him. There is a strange feeling about this letter."

"Pleasant for poor Mordent!" muttered Cartwright.

John Ackland sprang to his feet. He was not red this time, but frightfully pale, and trembling violently.

"The letter! the letter!" he cried, and seized the hand of Miss Simpson. The young lady started at his touch.

"Oh, Mr. Ackland," she cried, "why did nobody stop me? I never dreamed that it was *you*." But already John Ackland had left the room.

The next day Cartwright sought out his guest (Mr. Ackland had not reappeared in the drawing-room during the rest of that evening), and expressed his regret for the painful incident of the preceding night.

"I had no idea you were even acquainted with Mrs. Mordent," he said.

"But how do *you* happen to be acquainted with her?" asked John Ackland.

"Strictly speaking," he said, "I am not acquainted with her. Mordent and I were schoolfellows at West Point. He wrote to me some time ago informing me of his engagement to Miss Stevens; and, as I anticipated being absent from Virginia about that time, I wanted him and his bride to pass their honeymoon at Glenoak. I also asked him to send me a portrait of the future Mrs. M. I have portraits of all my friends' wives. A fancy of mine. He declined the invitation, but sent me the portrait, accompanied by a pretty little line from the lady herself. That is what I placed in Miss Simpson's hands last night; and I assure you that is all I know of Mrs. Mordent."

John Ackland's impatience to leave Glenoak was now, however, excessive. "Every time," he said to himself, "that I must face again the people in this house is intolerable pain to me."

Cartwright suggested to him that if resolved on so hasty a departure, he need not return to Richmond. "By going across country," he said, "you will save a long day's journey, and catch the Charleston coach at a point which is nearer here than Richmond. I can send your luggage on by the cart, this morning, and lend you a horse to ride there this afternoon. We will dine early, and if you start from here on horseback at four o'clock, you will be at your destination before nightfall, and a good hour before the coach is due there. I will be your guide across the plantation, and put you on your road, which you cannot possibly miss. I would gladly accompany you the whole way thither, if I had not some business with my overseer which must be settled to-night. You can leave the horse at your destination with the ostler there. I know him, and can trust him to bring it back safely to Glenoak. What say you?"

"That would certainly be my best and pleasantest plan," said Mr. Ackland, "and really I am much obliged to you for proposing it. But I suppose I ought to go to Richmond about those notes."

"No necessity for that, I think," answered Cartwright. "At least if you are in a hurry. At the next stage after you join the coach, you will be obliged to stop the greater part of the morning. I know a very respectable banker whose office is close to the hotel where you change horses and dine. I will give you a line to him if you like, and you can change the notes there."

"You are most kind, my dear friend, and I cannot sufficiently thank you. But do you think it would be safe to carry such a large sum in notes so far?"

"If you carry them about your person, yes. Luggage sometimes gets mislaid; but you need not be afraid of robbers. Our roads are not so unsafe as all that, Mr. Ackland, sir. I have travelled all across this country, sir, on horseback without ever having any misadventure, and once you are out of the plantation you have only a few miles between you and the coach. By the way, let me lend you my travelling belt."

"Then, indeed," said John Ackland, "if it does not seriously inconvenience you, I shall gladly accept your kind offer. For I confess that even your hospitality——"

"Yes, yes!" said Cartwright, "I understand. And greatly as I regret this departure, I cannot press you to stay. There will be no inconvenience at all, and I will at once give orders about your luggage."

After dinner, when John Ackland and his host were mounting their horses, "We shall have a cool ride, I think," said Cartwright, "and there's plenty of time, so that we can take it easy. I shouldn't wonder if we put up some game as we go along. We had better take our guns with us."

"I'm not much of a sportsman, I'm afraid," said John Ackland, with his customary blush.

"Oh," laughed the other, "I dare say you are a better shot than I. You Northerners are such modest gentlemen. Any how, there's no harm in having out the guns. You see they are in nobody's way. That's how we sling 'em in our country, rough but handy. Now then."

"Good-bye to Glenoak," said John Ackland, rather sadly, looking up at the house and waving his hand. His melancholy had been excessive during the whole day.

"Not good-bye altogether, I hope," said Cartwright.

And off they started.

CHAPTER III.

It was not yet dark when Cartwright returned alone to Glenoak. He found Judge Griffin, assisted by the betting young gentleman, working his way through a bottle of brandy and a box of cigars in the arbour.

"Well, Cartwright," said the judge, "I suppose your friend's off, eh?"

"Yes. Poor old Ackland! Good fellow as ever lived. I shall quite miss him."

"Very amiable man," said the judge.

"Bet you a pony, Cartwright," said the betting young gentleman.

"What on? Here, you black block-head, bring another bottle of brandy, ice, and soda-water. And look alive, do you hear? 'Gad, sir, I've swallowed a bushel of dust, and am as dry as mud in a brick-kiln."

"Bet you," resumed the betting young gentleman, "that the Yankee don't reach the coach to-night. Bet you, anyhow, he'll come to grief."

"What do you mean?" said Cartwright, sharply.

"Well, sir," responded that promising youth, "I reckon you should never have set him on that black mare of yours."

"Pooh," said Cartwright, "the mare's as quiet as a mouse."

"If you know how to ride her; but he don't. Very queer seat, that Yankee. Now she has him to herself, if she puts her head down he'll have no more chance with her, I reckon, than a cat in hell without claws," said the betting young gentleman, apparently much pleased with the originality and elegance of that striking figure of speech.

"I tell you the mare's as quiet as a mouse," growled Cartwright. "Pray do you suppose, my young friend, that your remarkable facility for falling head-foremost off the back of any four-legged animal can be acquired without very peculiar practice? You've been practising it yourself a good long time, you know."

The betting young gentleman, not finding any sufficiently expressive retort in the ready-made idiom of his native tongue, was carefully preparing one, when the judge interposed with,

"Find any game, Cartwright?"

"No," said Cartwright, "not to speak of. I had only one shot, and Ackland none."

"Guessed I heard a gun about an hour ago," said the betting young gentleman.

"Lord bless you and me, judge," said Cartwright, "if this child here ain't going to die, I *do* believe, of a determination of intelligence to the brain. The peculiar acuteness of his youthful faculties is something quite astonishing."

"Well, I guess I wasn't born yesterday," responded the disconcerted subject of this sarcastic compliment, "and when you were as young as I am——"

"I never was as young as you are, sir," said Cartwright.

"Well, never mind that. What did you bag, old boy?"

"Nothing, young reverend."

"Never knew you miss before, Cartwright."

"Well, I don't *often* miss, when the game is as easy—as easy as I mostly find it whenever I have the pleasure of a crack with you, my young friend."

In this sprightly conversation Mr. Philip Cartwright was still exercising his wit and humour, when that "black blockhead," as his master called him, entered the arbour, looking as white as a black man can look, and whispered something to him.

"Returned? impossible!" cried Cartwright, springing up.

"What's the matter?" cried the two other gentlemen; "Ackland back again?"

"No, but the mare's back again, riderless, covered with foam, and the saddle turned. The mare I lent him."

"Told you he'd come to grief with her. Shouldn't wonder if she's broke his neck," exclaimed the betting young gentleman, with joyful exultation.

"Tell Sam to saddle my horse instantly," cried Cartwright. "Not the one I had out to-day, a fresh one."

"Why, where are you going, Cartwright?" asked the judge, not very well pleased at the prospect of interrupted potations and a dull evening.

"To look for poor Ackland. And at once."

"But it's a good twelve miles' ride."

"Can't help that, judge. If anything has happened to my poor friend, if the mare has thrown him, he may be in want of assistance. I saw him safe through the plantation. If anything has happened to him, it cannot have been long after I left him, or the mare would hardly have got home by now, even at a gallop. Stay, I'd better take the waggon, I think. If he's hurt we shall want it. Who will come with me?"

"Not I," said the judge. "I'm too old. But I tell you what, Cartwright, if you'll order another bottle I'll sit up for you."

"I'll come," said the betting young gentleman.

"Pooh," cried Cartwright, with ineffable contempt. "You're no use. I must be off." And off he went.

When he returned to Glenoak about three o'clock in the morning, the judge had kept his word, and was sitting up for him, having nearly finished his second bottle. Cartwright dropped into a chair haggard and exhausted. He had been to the Coach's point and back, but had discovered nothing, except, indeed, that neither horse nor rider had arrived that evening from Glenoak at the inn at that town, and that the Charleston coach had taken in no passengers there.

"The whole thing is a mystery," he said.

"It fairly beats me."

"And beat you look," said the judge; "you'd best take a cocktail and go to bed. Found no trace of him on the road?"

"Nothing."

"Nor heard anything of him?"

"Nothing; absolutely nothing."

The next morning all the slaves on Mr. Cartwright's estate were assembled and interrogated about the missing gentleman. Judge Griffin himself conducted the inquiry, and very severely he did it. Of course, they all contradicted each other and themselves, and floundered about in a fathomless slough of unintelligibility; for, whatever natural intelligence they possessed was extinguished by the terror of the great judge, or lost in the labyrinths of cross-examination. One old negro in particular, "whose name was Uncle Ned," revealed such a profundity of stupidity, that the judge said, "Cartwright, that nigger of yours is the stupidest nigger in all niggerdom."

"He is," said Cartwright, "and if the black beast don't mind what he's about I'll sell him—whip him first, and sell him afterwards."

"He won't fetch much, I reckon," said the judge.

"I'll skin him alive and make squash pie of him, and eat him with pepper, and salt, and vinegar," said Cartwright, showing all the teeth in his handsome mouth, and looking very much like a hungry ogre. "I have my eye on him," he added, "and he knows it."

Poor Uncle Ned did indeed appear to have a very lively sense of the uncomfort-

able honour of having Mr. Cartwright's eye on him. For he trembled violently, and looked like an old black umbrella with all its whalebones working in a high wind.

One thing, however, resulted from this investigation. None of Mr. Cartwright's negroes had seen anything, none of them had heard anything, none of them knew anything, that could shed the smallest light on the fate of John Ackland.

All Mr. Cartwright's guests were greatly excited about the events of the previous evening, especially the ladies.

"We have done all that can be done for the present, my dear ladies," said Judge Griffin, "but I regret to say that as yet we have no clue to this mystery. By the way, Cartwright, suppose we try Miss Simpson?"

"Oh, pray, no!" said that young lady; "you know, I have already been so very unlucky about poor Mr. Ackland."

"But you can't hurt his feelings now, my dear, as, unfortunately, he is not here; and really it is just possible that you may be able to suggest something."

"Psha!" cried Cartwright, impatiently; "you don't mean to say you seriously believe in that nonsense, judge?"

"Nonsense or not, there is no harm in trying," said the judge, "and you have, doubtless, some letter of Ackland's that will do."

"But," said Miss Simpson, "it ought to be, please, something written very recently, if possible."

"Stay!" exclaimed Cartwright, "I have the very thing. I believe it was the last thing John Ackland wrote in this house. Anyhow, the writing is not a week old."

"What is it?" said the judge.

"Why, his receipt, to be sure, for the money I paid him the other day."

Mr. Cartwright appeared to regard this document as one of peculiar interest. He insisted on handing it round, and showing it to every one: remarking at the same time that "Ackland wrote a bolder hand than any one could have supposed from the look of the man." The only person to whose hands he did not seem particularly willing to entrust it, was Miss Simpson. All the party, however, were eager for the experiment to begin, and that young lady was much urged to try her magnetic powers on the document.

"Don't crumple it!" cried Cartwright, nervously, as she took up the paper somewhat reluctantly.

Hardly had she touched it, however,

before Miss Simpson's whole frame seemed to be convulsed by a sharp spasm.

"Take it away!" she cried—"take it away! You have put me in rapport with a —."

The rest of this exclamation was inaudible. But Miss Simpson had fainted. It was a long time before she was restored to consciousness; and then she declared that she had no recollection of anything which had passed.

"I tell you what it is," said Philip Cartwright to Judge Griffin that evening, "this is a very serious business; and we ought not to be losing time about it. You must come with me, judge, to Richmond to-morrow."

"Do you suspect violence or foul play?" said the judge.

"I don't know," answered Cartwright, "I don't like the look of it. I believe that John Ackland when he left Glenoak had a large sum of money with him. For I had some talk with him about the possibility of changing it at the first stage to Charleston. We ought to lose no time, I think, in setting the police to work."

Cartwright, accompanied by Judge Griffin, went to Richmond the next day. And they did set the police to work. And the police worked hard for a fortnight, and made a great many inquiries, and suggested a great many ingenious hypotheses, but discovered absolutely nothing.

"All we can do now," said the judge, "is to send or write to Charleston. But, meanwhile, don't you think we ought to communicate with Mr. Ackland's friends in the north, or relatives, if he has any? Do you know any of them?"

"Yes," said Cartwright, "I had thought of that before. But the painful excitement of our inquiries here during the last few days had put it out of my mind. I am not personally acquainted with any relations of poor Ackland. But I believe he has a cousin at Boston—a Mr. Tom Ackland—a lawyer, I think—and I'll write to him at once. I don't think I can do any more good here, judge."

"Certainly not," said the judge; "you've done all that man can do, and more than any man could have done without the wits and energy of Philip Cartwright."

"But I'm quite knocked up," said Cartwright, "and I shall return to Glenoak to-morrow."

Mr. Philip Cartwright, however, did not return to Glenoak quite so soon as he said. For on the evening of that morrow he was

still at Richmond, and engaged in the transaction of a very important little piece of business.

CHAPTER IV.

In the city of Richmond, Virginia, United States, and in a back street of a certain quarter of that town which was not very well reputed, there existed a certain gambling-house which was very ill reputed. As it is fortunately possible for the reader of this voracious history to enter that house without losing either his character or his purse, he is hereby invited to do so, and to grope his way, as best he can, up a dark and greasy staircase till he reaches the third landing, where, in a small room to which "strangers are not admitted," he will find Mr. Philip S. Cartwright in close conversation with a Mexican gentleman lately arrived in Richmond. This Mexican gentleman is of such modest and retiring habits, that although he has been resident about three weeks in the capital of Virginia, and is a gentleman of striking appearance and varied accomplishments, he is as yet unknown to any of the inhabitants of that city, with the exception of two or three enterprising spirits who are interested in the fortunes of the establishment which he has honoured by selecting as his temporary place of abode. Perhaps, also, the name of this interesting foreigner (which figures on his visiting-cards as Don Ramon Cabrera y Castro) may be not altogether unknown to some professional students of character whose researches are recorded in the secret archives of the Richmond Police. But, if this be so, neither he nor they have as yet taken any steps towards increasing their acquaintance with each other. To the select few who have been privileged to hold unrestricted personal intercourse with Don Ramon during his short residence at Richmond, he is familiarly known as the Don. He is a gentleman of polished manners and polished nails; an epicurean philosopher, who takes the evil with the good of life cheerfully and calmly. By the side of the don, even the descendant of the cavaliers looks coarse and underbred.

"I tell you," said Cartwright, "it was all no use. You must get up early if you want to catch a Yankee napping. He would have nothing to do with it. Said it wasn't in his line of business. *Bref*, that cock wouldn't fight, sir."

"Just so," said the don, without looking up from the occupation in which he was then absorbed, for he was paring his nails.

They were very polished, very pink, and very spiky nails. "You failed, in short, my dear friend."

"Not my fault," replied Cartwright: "I did what I could."

"Of course," said the don; "and Don Filippo can't do more than a man can do. You did what you could, but you couldn't dispose of the notes. Just so. Where are they?"

"Here," said Cartwright, "and you'll find them all right." He pushed a little black box across the table, which seemed to be common property of the two gentlemen, for the don took a small key from his own pocket, opened the box, and taking from it a bundle of bank-notes, held up one of them against the candle (making a transparency of it), and contemplated it with a tender, musing, and melancholy eye.

"They are beautifully made," he murmured, softly; "just look at the watermark, *mi querido* Don Filippo. A masterpiece of art!"

"Yes," said Cartwright, "they couldn't beat that in New York."

"Not in all the world—not in heaven itself!" sighed the don, with that subdued voice expressive of sensuous oppression which is inspired by the contemplation of any perfectly beautiful object.

"But I reckon you'd better not drop 'em about Richmond," said Cartwright.

"You think so?" responded the don, musingly; "you really think so?"

"Our people are too sharp now. They were caught once, but I take it they won't be caught twice."

"Caught once?"

"Out and out. Two years ago. By a Quaker chap travelling down South for the propagation of Christian knowledge, and various little manufactured articles of your sort."

"Then it's no use my staying here?" said the don.

"Don't think it is," said Cartwright.

"And I think you'd better pay my bill before I leave, my dear friend."

"I'll do what I promised," said Cartwright.

"You really think, then," said the don, "that there is no opening for investment at Richmond?"

"That's a fact," said Cartwright.

"But you forget," resumed his companion, "that if I did invest any portion of this little capital for the benefit of your city, sir, and if that benevolent speculation unhappily failed, I at least should be spared

the pain of contemplating the failure, since I should no longer be in the States."

"It would fail," said Cartwright, "before you could get clear of the States, and the Union has extradition treaties."

"Not with all the world," replied the don; "not with all America even. Not with Texas, for instance."

"Well, why not try Texas at once? Capital place. Just over the frontier, and just beyond the law."

"I am thinking of it," said the don. "But there are drawbacks. Judge Lynch, for instance, bowie-knives, and tar-barrels, if a man has the misfortune to lose popularity. Besides, 'tis a devil of a distance; and though, of course, you will pay travelling expenses——"

"That's not in the bargain," exclaimed Cartwright, thrusting his hands in his pockets, and walking up and down the room, not very unlike a Bengal tiger in a small cage. "I never agreed to that, don."

"But you will agree to it, of course. Friends must help each other, specially such intimate friends as you and I. And just now, you know, you are so rich—at least, so much richer than I."

"I ain't rich," said Cartwright; "and you know it. But I have an idea, don."

"Felicita!" cried the don, bowing. "Ideas are valuable properties. Yours especially, my dear friend. Virginia mines; you don't work 'em half enough. I suppose you want a partner. What are the terms?"

"I want you to go down to Charleston."

"It is out of my way."

"Expenses paid."

"And from there to Texas?"

"And from there to Texas."

"Business at Charleston likely to last long?"

"A month at longest. Possibly less."

"Say a month, then. Charleston's a dear city. Month's board, lodging, carriage hire, small pleasures——"

"Paid."

"For a foreign gentleman of distinction. Living twice as dear for foreigners as for natives. Risk paid, too. Risk's everything in the calculation, you know. May be heavy. Haven't heard what it is yet."

"None in the world. But I must think the matter over. Meet me here to-morrow night at the same hour. If we agree as to terms, can you start at once?"

"The sooner the better, my dear friend."

"Then to-morrow night."

"I shall await you here."

"And now," said Cartwright, "to get out of this cursed den without being seen. Don't forget to-morrow night."

So the two gentlemen parted for that evening.

They met again on the following night according to appointment. On each occasion the conversation between them was carried on in Spanish, the only language which Don Ramon spoke fluently. In the interval between their first and second interview, Cartwright was busily engaged all day and a great part of the night, too, in his own room at the hotel. Probably in some occupation of a literary nature; for before he began it he purchased a great quantity of writing materials, various kinds of inks, various kinds of pens, various kinds of paper, and when he had finished it, he left behind him, as he unlocked the door and went out to keep his appointment with Don Ramon, not even a pen or a scrap of paper. The work on which he had been so assiduously employed must have absorbed all these materials, and perhaps spoiled many of them; for in the room, as he left it, there was a strong smell of burnt pens and burnt paper.

On the morrow of that night Don Ramon left Richmond, not by the ordinary conveyance, but by a horse and buggy, which he had purchased for the purpose, since, he said, he was travelling for his pleasure. And to a gentleman who could afford to pay for his pleasure, nothing was less pleasant than to be booked from place to place like a parcel. The same day Philip Cartwright returned to Glenoak.

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VERONICA.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE."

IN FIVE BOOKS.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER I. AUNT AND NIECE.

IN the first shock of amazement at the calamity which had overtaken the family at the vicarage, none of those who participated in it had had room in their minds for the entertainment of any minor sensation of surprise.

But it was not very long—not many days, that is to say—before Lady Tallis, or as her proper title now ran, Lady Tallis Gale, began to wonder how Mr. Levincourt had discovered her whereabouts, and to question Maud on the subject.

The latter had been very ill during the first days of her stay in London. Grief and anxiety alone would not have prostrated the youthful vigour of her body. But so many harrowing emotions preceding a long night-journey, and so overwhelming a shock awaiting at the close of the journey a frame in great need of food and rest, had stricken down the young girl, and laid her on a bed of sickness.

Her aunt forgot her own delicacy of health and inert habits to tend Maud. She would scarcely allow a servant to come near the suffering girl, but waited on her day and night with untiring care.

In spite of the terrible circumstances which had brought Maud to London, in spite of the dreadful discovery that the man who had been guilty of the abduction of Veronica Levincourt was the husband who had wronged, outraged, and finally abandoned herself, it would not be too much to say that Hilda Tallis enjoyed the

first moments of happiness she had known during many weary years, by the bedside of her sister's child.

It was sweet to feel that there was some one bound by the ties of blood to feel kindly toward her. It was still sweeter to find a being who—at least for a time—depended upon *her* for love and care and tendance.

The poor lonely wife, in the first days of the discovery that her husband had ceased to feel for her, even such love as can be inspired by a fair face, had longed with all her heart for a child.

The conduct of Sir John Tallis, which had gone on deepening through every shade, from grey indifference down to absolutely black brutality, had effectually quenched whatever germ of regard for him poor Hilda might once have cherished. But for some time she clung to the idea that he would be kinder to her if there were any prospect of her bringing him an heir. She was the kind of woman who would probably have loved her children better than her husband, even had that husband been good and affectionate.

She would have enjoyed superintending the government of a nursery, and have craved for no other companionship than that of her prattling babies.

The dependency of sickness made Maud appear almost like a child in her aunt's eyes. Lady Tallis nursed her with more than needful devotion. She was jealous of any person save herself approaching her niece to render any service. The sound of Maud's voice calling on her for the least tendance was music in her ears. She would even have liked the sick girl to be more exacting in her demands. And had Maud been the most fretful and imperious of invalids, instead of being, as she was,

thoroughly patient and self-controlled. Lady Tallis would have joyfully indulged her in every whim.

In a few days, however, the illness passed away, and Maud insisted on rising, although Lady Tallis declared that she ought not to leave her bed for at least another week to come.

The vicar remained in London until Maud's health was re-established. He lingered about the house in Gower-street fitfully, and would seldom consent to enter Lady Tallis's apartments; but he informed himself daily of his ward's condition.

At length, after rather more than a fortnight's sojourn in London, he returned to Shipley.

"It is a horrible trial to go back," said he, in his farewell interview with Maud.

"Must you go, Uncle Charles?" she asked, her eyes brimming with tears, which she kept from falling by a strong effort of will.

"Must I? Yes: I cannot give up the vicarage. I cannot exist without it. I cannot afford to pay another man to do my duty there, and retain enough to live upon. I might put off the evil day a while longer. But to what purpose? The sight of the place—the very name of the place—is loathsome to me. But what can I do?"

"I wish I could help you!"

"You cannot help me, Maudie. No one can help me."

Then Maud asked a timid faltering question, holding his hand and turning away her head as she spoke. Had he heard any tidings of—of—the fugitives?

She could not see his face, but his voice was very stern and deep as he answered her. They had gone abroad together, he had learned. Gone to Italy. It mattered nothing to what place. *She* was dead to him henceforward. Maud must mention her name no more. He had answered her question; but she must promise never to speak to him of his lost daughter more.

"I cannot promise it, dear Uncle Charles," said Maud, no longer able to restrain her tears.

"Maud! Do not you separate yourself from me, too!"

"No, no! I shall always love you, and be grateful to you. But I—I cannot make that promise. Some day you might be glad yourself that I did not make it."

Mr. Levincourt rose. "Good-by, Maud," he said, abruptly. "The time is drawing near for my departure. I have but a couple of hours before leaving London."

He went out and closed the door.

She heard his footsteps descending the stairs slowly and heavily. He paused, came back, and re-entering the room where Maud was silently weeping, took her in his arms and kissed her forehead. She clung to him, sobbing. "O thank you," she murmured—"thank you for coming back. You are not angry with me, dear Uncle Charles?"

"No, no; not angry—never angry with thee, my sweet childie. God bless thee, Maud! God for ever bless thee!"

"You will write to me, Uncle Charles, will you not?"

"I—perhaps—well, well, I will write to you."

"And I may come and stay with you again some day? If even it is but for a time, I may come? You will be so lonely!" she added, with a passionate burst of tears.

"Heaven knows, my child! It may be that some day— Good-by, Maud. God Almighty bless and guard you for ever!"

Then he went away.

Lady Tallis's intentions in her behaviour to her niece were all kindness, but it often happened that she inflicted pain from want of judgment. But on the evening of the day on which the above interview took place, Lady Tallis's garrulity was grateful to Maud's feelings. So long as her aunt would talk on indifferent subjects, and let her listen in silence, or at most with the occasional contribution of a monosyllable, the young girl was able to retain a calmness and quietude that were soothing to mind and body.

Lady Tallis's conversation rambled on discursively from topic to topic. She talked of scenes familiar to her own childhood, and of persons who died before Maud was born, as though the latter must naturally be thoroughly acquainted with what *she* knew so well.

All at once she laid down her work, and exclaimed: "Oh, by-the-by, now! There's something I particularly wanted to say to ye, and I have never said it yet!"

Maud was beginning to understand that her aunt's emphasis was by no means always proportioned to the importance of that which she had to say: at least as far as she (Maud) could judge of the relative amount of importance that could fairly be attributed to Lady Tallis's speeches. She was therefore less startled than she might have been a fortnight earlier, by her aunt's impressive announcement.

"What is it that you wanted to say, Aunt Hilda?"

"Why, my goodness, my darling child, I wonder how in the world I never asked the question before! It has been in my mind *hundreds* of times!"

Maud waited patiently with an attentive face.

"How in the world, did you and Mr. Levincourt find out that I was living here? D'ye know, my dear pet, I am perfectly astonished to remember that I was not *more* astonished at the time! Can ye understand that state of mind? It was all such a whirl, such a sudden, unexpected kind of thing altogether, that I suppose a little wonder more or less didn't make much difference!"

"Our coming straight to the place where you lived, was a mere chance, Aunt Hilda. We came here with merely a hope, and not a very strong one, that we might get your address from Mrs. Lockwood. And even then, we should not have found you, had not Uncle Charles's card been carried up to Mrs. Lockwood with an inquiry for Lady Tallis written on it. Otherwise, as you are now Lady Gale, we should have missed you, though you were so close to us. But Mrs. Lockwood knew at once that you were the person we were asking for."

"And did ye know Mrs. Lockwood? Why now, just imagine her never mentioning in the most distant manner, that she had the smallest acquaintance with any of the family! I declare it's most extraordinary! And the *times* I have spoken to her of my niece! For, my darling, I needn't say that if we have been separated all these years, it has not been from any indifference on my part!"

Maud quietly explained that she had never seen or known Mrs. Lockwood, but that she had met her son at a country house; and that he had spoken of Lady Tallis, and of the manner in which he and his mother had made her ladyship's acquaintance.

"It's all perfectly true, my dear, every syllable of it!" said Lady Tallis, with as much solemnity of corroboration as though Maud had expressed the gravest doubts of Mr. Hugh Lockwood's veracity.

"Yes, aunt: I did not feel any doubt of that," she answered.

"No, ye need not, child. An exceedingly amiable and gentleman-like young man he is. And his mother is a delightful person. I called on her according to promise, when I came to London. I was staying in a boarding-house; and that's what I would *never* advise any one I cared

for to do, the longest day they had to live! Oh, upon my honour and word, the dreariness and misery of the boarding-houses I have been in, exceed description. I thought I would find something like society, but, oh dear me! the people you have to put up with, are something unspeakable! However, that wasn't what I was going to tell ye. Well, I asked Mrs. Lockwood, did she happen to know of any respectable lodging in her neighbourhood. For I was resolved to get quit of boarding-houses altogether. And I wished to be within hail of some human being that would say a kind word to me once a month, or so: for, indeed, child, I was *very* lonely."

"Poor Aunt Hilda!" whispered Maud, stroking Lady Tallis's thin hand.

"Oh indeed ye may say 'rich Aunt Hilda,' now I have you, Maudie. Here, let me put this footstool under your feet. Nonsense, child, about 'troubling myself.' You're not half as strong yet as you fancy yourself. There! Well, so just fancy my delight when she said that she would be very glad to let the first floor of her own house to a person that she knew! My dear, I *jumped* at it. And here I am, and extremely comfortable it is. And *cheap*. For you know, my dear child, that *he* keeps me shamefully short of money. Sometimes I have much ado to get any at all. Well, there, then, we won't say any more on *that* score just now. But ye'll like Mrs. Lockwood—oh indeed ye will!"

"Is she—I mean is her son at all like her?"

"Not the very least bit in the world," rejoined Lady Tallis, with a sort of almost triumphant emphasis. "Not one atom. I never, in the whole course of my days, saw a mother and son more *entirely* unlike each other."

"Oh!"

"Entirely unlike each other. Why, now, the young man—Hugh—is a strapping handsome young fellow as you'd be likely to meet in a long summer's day. Isn't he?"

"Oh, yes."

"Oh, yes! Upon my honour, you don't seem more than half to agree with me. But I can tell you that if you don't think Hugh Lockwood a remarkably fine young man, you are more fastidious than the girls used to be in my time. It may be true that he hasn't quite the grand air. And if you are as much of a Delaney as your poor grandpapa, you may object to

that. Hugh certainly is tant soit peu bourgeois."

"Oh, I thought, Aunt Hilda—we all thought at Lowater House—that Mr. Lockwood was thoroughly a gentleman."

"Well, I'm delighted to hear it. I fancied you were turning up your nose at him a little. How flushed you are, child! Let me feel your forehead. No; there's no appearance of fever. And now the colour is fading away again. I shall send you to bed at nine o'clock—not a moment later."

"Very well, Aunt Hilda. But you were saying—that—that Mrs. Lockwood——"

"Oh, to be sure! Yes; let me see. Mrs. Lockwood—Oh, now I have it! I was saying that she is so unlike her son, wasn't I? Well, she is. He is, as I said, a strapping robust-looking creature. I suppose he inherits his burliness from his peasant ancestors. His father's father, you know, was—Ah! you *do* know all about it? Yes—quite rustics. And Hugh is not in the least ashamed of his grandfather."

"Ashamed! Why should he be ashamed?"

"Well, my dear, if you come to that, why should we be proud of *our* ancestors? Upon my word, I don't know. Still, there is a kind of feeling. However, Hugh is too manly and upright for any mean pretensions, and I quite respect him for it. But as to his mother, she is the tiniest fairy of a woman you ever saw in all your days. She really is more like one of the 'good people' that our old nurse at Delancy used to tell us about, than anything else—in size, I mean—for there is nothing fantastic about her."

"I am sure to like her for her kindness to you, Aunt Hilda."

"Indeed, she is very kind. And so thoughtful! and has such good manners! She came every day while you were in bed, and inquired about you. But she never intrudes. But I thought of asking her to take tea with us quietly some evening, if you don't mind. For now her son is not at home, she is lonely too. And before I had you, Maudie, I was very glad of Mrs. Lockwood's company."

Maud, of course, begged that her aunt would invite Mrs. Lockwood as often as she chose. But in truth she shrank from the sight of a stranger. There was no hour of the day when Veronica was absent from her thoughts. There had been no preparation for the terrific blow that had fallen. *She had bade Veronica farewell that night*

at Lowater House, with no faintest foreshadowing of what was to come. She tormented herself sometimes with the idea that if she (Maud) had returned to the vicarage and remained with Veronica, the evil would not have happened. There were moments when she longed, with a painfully intense longing, to set forth to follow the unhappy girl, to find her, and bring her back, and soothe and cherish her, and shelter her among them again. She could not understand that her guardian should abandon his daughter without an effort. Then the doubt arose whether Veronica herself would consent to return.

"If I could go to her, see her, and persuade her, she would come back; she would leave that dreadful man. She cannot care for him——"

So ran her thoughts. And then the remembrance would startle her like a sudden blow, that the man was the husband of her mother's sister; and she would hide her face in her trembling hands and shudder with a confused sensation of terror.

She was spared the spectacle of any acute suffering on the part of her aunt.

Lady Tallis made no pretensions to outraged wifely affection. All such sentiment had been killed in her long years ago. But there was a curious phase of feeling—the last faint protest of her trampled self-respect—the one drop of gall in her submissive nature—which made her regard Veronica with something as near rancour as could be entertained by a character so flavourless, meek, and weak.

Maud shrank with instinctive delicacy from any mention of Veronica to the wife of Sir John Gale. But her aunt had voluntarily spoken of the vicar's daughter on one or two occasions; and had mentioned her in terms that caused Maud the most exquisite pain. The relations of the latter to all concerned in this misery and shame, were peculiarly complicated and delicate. And the sorrowing girl strove to hide her grief. Maud's was still the same nature which had caused Mrs. Levincourt to characterise her as "stolid" and "unfeeling," when she had suppressed her childish tears at sight of the strange faces in her new home. Mrs. Levincourt never knew that the pillow in the little crib had been wetted that first night with bitter, but silent tears. Maud could bear the pain of her wound, but she could not bear that it should be approached by a coarse or unsympathising touch.

For all these reasons, and from the know-

ledge, speedily acquired, that her aunt was too entirely devoid of dignity to be reticent upon any subject which it entered her head to discuss, Maud looked forward with nervous dread to the introduction of Mrs. Lockwood into Lady Tallis's drawing-room.

CHAPTER II. THE LOCKWOODS.

ZILLAH LOCKWOOD was a very remarkable-looking woman. It was not merely the smallness of her stature that made her so. She was, as Lady Tallis had said, extremely fragile and fairy-like, with very delicate, well-formed hands and feet, and an upright straight figure. But this small frail creature conveyed an almost startling impression of power and resolution: power of an undemonstrative, steady, suppressed kind.

"How enchantingly pretty Mrs. Lockwood must have been!" was the exclamation of nine people out of ten after seeing her for the first time.

Those who remembered Zillah Lockwood in her youth, declared that she had been enchantingly pretty. But it may be doubted whether she had ever been so, in the strict sense of the word. There could be no doubt, however, that hers must always have been a singularly attractive face. And it was perhaps even more generally attractive at fifty years of age than it had been at twenty. She had an abundance of grey hair, soft, fine, and carefully dressed. Her forehead was low and broad; her eyes were black and sparkling, but their lids were discoloured, and there was a faded, weary look about the whole setting and surrounding of her eyes that contrasted with the fresh delicate paleness of the rest of her complexion.

"Crying spoils the eyes. Years ago I cried, almost incessantly, for six weeks," she once said, quietly, to one who remarked this peculiarity of her face. "At last they told me that I was risking total loss of sight. So then I got frightened, and left off weeping—with my eyes."

Her jaw was slightly what is called under-hung, and when the lips met and closed firmly (as they habitually did when her face was in repose), this peculiarity gave an expression of singular resolution to her mouth. It looked as though it were forcibly compressed by a special effort of her will. The upper lip was thin and straight. When she spoke, she showed two perfect ranges of small sharp teeth.

Her whole person was pervaded by an air of scrupulous and dainty neatness. She

always wore black, and her head was adorned, not covered, by a white muslin cap, whose crisply-frilled border of delicate lace was a marvel of freshness. The collar at her throat and the cuffs at her wrists were of plain linen in the morning, of lace in the evening, and in either case were guiltless of soil or stain.

"How she does it in this smoky London is more than I can conceive!" would poor Lady Tallis exclaim, casting a pathetic glance on her own dingy and crumpled garments. But her ladyship was one of those unfortunate persons for whose clothes dust and smoke and stains seem to have a mysterious attraction. "Smuts" flew to her collar, and settled there fondly. Dust eddied round her in suffocating clouds whenever she ventured into the streets, or else she found herself wading ankle-deep in mud. Gravy splashed itself over her sleeves at dinner; ink pervaded her attire when she wrote a letter; and the grease from lamp or candle dropped on her silk gown with a frequency which almost seemed to argue conscious malice.

The first impression which Maud Desmond derived from Mrs. Lockwood's appearance and manner was a sense of relief.

She had half expected a vulgar, bustling, good-natured, noisy woman. Maud had gained sufficient knowledge of Lady Tallis to be aware that her perceptions were not acute, nor her taste refined. Indeed Maud, in pondering upon her aunt's character, was frequently brought face to face with problems, the pursuit of which would have led her into deeper speculations than she contemplated attempting. Why was this woman, gently born and bred, endowed with blunter sensibilities, duller brains, coarser—yes, truly coarser—manners than the poor widow of a humble artist, who sprang from mean obscurity and eked out her living as a letter of lodgings? Why, of the two sisters, Hilda and Clara Delaney, had one been a refined, graceful, elegant gentlewoman, and the other—such a woman as Lady Tallis? Maud remembered her mother, and contrasted her bearing and manners with Lady Tallis's. Had Clara Desmond pronounced any woman to be kind, thoughtful, and well-mannered, those persons who knew the speaker would have expected the object of her praise to be one whose society might be pleasant to the most fastidious. But when Hilda Tallis used the same phrases, Maud perfectly understood that they must be accepted with due reservations.

Her first sensation on meeting Mrs. Lockwood was therefore, as has been stated, a sensation of relief. It was soon evident that there was no fear of Mrs. Lockwood's failing in discrimination or tact.

"You met my son at Lowater House, Miss Desmond?" said Mrs. Lockwood, stitching away with nimble fingers at the hem of a handkerchief. She had been drinking tea with Lady Tallis, and had seen Maud for the first time that evening.

"Yes. Mr. Lockwood was staying there at the same time with myself."

"Captain Sheardown has always been very kind to Hugh. His father, Admiral Sheardown, was my husband's earliest friend and patron. The admiral had a great taste for art."

"So had poor papa!" exclaimed Lady Tallis. "I remember Clara—your dear mother, my pet—had a very pretty taste for flower-painting. And papa had a master from Dublin to stay in the house nearly the whole of one summer on Clara's account. My brother James and I couldn't *enjure* him! Sure he was the snuffiest old wretch ye can imagine. We would plague his life out by hiding his snuff-box."

"I expect Hugh home next week," pursued Mrs. Lockwood, calmly.

"And, indeed, I will be delighted to see him again," said her ladyship. "He is a pearl of young men."

"I don't know about being a pearl," said Mrs. Lockwood; "but Hugh is a good son. I think he is on the whole a good man."

"Of course he is! Why wouldn't he be? Hugh is an excellent creature."

"It is a bold assertion to make. In all my life I have only met with two good men."

"Well now, on my honour, I do believe there are a great many good men in the world—if one only knew where to find them!" said Lady Tallis. Then she added, "As for you, you ought to go down on your knees, and thank Heaven for such a son as Hugh. Oh, if I had only had a boy like that I'd have doted on him!"

The faintest possible smile flitted over Mrs. Lockwood's face. She kept her eyes fixed on her work, as she answered, "I have a sneaking kindness for Hugh, myself. But he has his faults."

"I don't believe he has a fault in the world!" protested Lady Tallis, energetically.

"I can assure you that he has, though!

Amongst others—obstinacy. Hugh is very obstinate. Ask Miss Desmond if she did not get the impression that my son has a strong will of his own."

Maud had been listening silently to the talk of the two elder women, and had been watching Mrs. Lockwood's face with an intentness that would have been ill-mannered had it not been for the fact that the latter kept her eyes cast down on her work, and so was unconscious of the young girl's close observation. Maud was a little disconcerted when the heavy dark lids were suddenly raised, and the bright eyes beneath them were fixed upon her own.

"Oh, I—I don't know," she said. "I suppose a man ought to have a strong will."

"And a woman——?"

"Oh, a woman," interrupted Lady Tallis, "must just make up her mind to have no will at all! You may fight and struggle, but a man is always the strongest, *an bout du compte*! And as he has all the power, I don't see what use her *will* can be to a woman!"

"Is that your philosophy, Miss Desmond?"

"Oh, I? I don't think I have any philosophy," answered Maud, simply.

"At all events, rightly or wrongly, my son is obstinate, and he wishes to take a step that I think ought to be deferred yet awhile. He is dying to set up on his own account, as the phrase goes. Digby and West, to whom he was articulated, have offered to keep him in their office on advantageous terms, for a couple of years. I say, hold fast your one bird in the hand! Hugh hankers after the two in the bush. We shall see. I am afraid Captain Sheardown's councils have confirmed Hugh in his desire. My son writes me that several of his father's old friends in the neighbourhood of Shipley and Danecester have been encouraging him to make the attempt; and have been promising him all sorts of things. Hugh is only twenty-four years old; and he believes most of what is said to him."

"I am quite sure," said Maud, with some warmth, "that Captain Sheardown would say nothing that he did not mean."

"Doubtless. But promises impossible of fulfilment are made with the most perfect sincerity every day."

After a little more desultory chat, Mrs. Lockwood folded up her work, and went away, saying, that she would leave Miss Desmond to go to rest: and that she would pre-

pare with her own hand a basin of arrow-root for the supper of Lady Tallis, who was not looking strong, she said. "My arrowroot is excellent, I assure you," said Mrs. Lockwood to Maud. "Her ladyship will give me a certificate. I am a very fair cook, am I not, my lady?"

"Indeed, then, I don't know the thing you can *not* do, if you try!" said Lady Tallis, enthusiastically. And, when Mrs. Lockwood was gone, she descanted to Maud on their landlady's talents and good qualities in a strain of unmixed eulogy.

"Now, are ye not enchanted with her?" she asked of her niece.

"I—yes; I like her very much. She is very clever, I think."

"Oh, clever's no word for it. She is an extraordinary little creature; quite extraordinary. You don't know all that's in that head of hers yet, I can assure you."

"I should imagine that she has known much sorrow and trouble," said Maud, musingly. "I wonder what her history is!"

"Oh, as to that," rejoined her ladyship, to whom the suggestion appeared to be a new one, "I don't suppose she has much of a history at all. How would she? She and her husband were quite humble people."

"But, aunt, she has evidently received a good education, and she has the manners of a lady, moreover. Did you notice, too, in reading the title of that French book that lay on the table, how admirably she pronounced it?"

"My dear child, for that matter, we had a dancing-mistress once, who spoke French beautifully! And she was quite an ignorant person. Her father was a Parisian barber, we were told; but she called herself *Mademoiselle de Something* or other. I forget the name now. Any way, Mrs. Lockwood is vastly superior to her!"

The incoherence of these remarks, and the impossibility of conjecturing what it was they were intended to prove, silenced Maud.

Presently Lady Tallis exclaimed, in a sudden, pouncing way, which her physical delicacy alone prevented from being absolutely violent: "And ye haven't told me yet how you like my little Queen of the Fairies!"

"Yes, aunt, I said that I liked Mrs. Lockwood very much: only——"

"Only what?"

"Well, it seems rather a pity that she should take such a gloomy view of things, does it not?"

"Gloomy! Now upon my word and honour a cheerfuller little creature I never saw or heard of! That is *my* notion, my dear girl."

"Gloomy is not the right word, either."

"Very much the wrong word, I should say."

"Yes; but what I mean is, that—that——. It is rather difficult to explain. Mrs. Lockwood is cheerful, but it is not because she finds things to be good, Aunt Hilda."

"Well, then, all the more credit to her for being cheerful."

"I think she would be more likely to be credulous of an evil report than a good report; not because she is ill-natured, but because she *expects* evil to happen, and thinks it likely. I am sure that she must have had some great trouble in her life."

At the beginning of the following week Hugh Lockwood returned home.

He had, of course, already learned from his mother the fact that Lady Tallis and her niece were inmates of the house in Gower-street.

He was able to inform his mother of many particulars of the blow which had fallen on the family at the vicarage. The whole country was ringing with the story. Hugh had heard it discussed in all sorts of tones, by all sorts of people. A great number were inclined to blame Mr. Levincourt severely, for having been culpably negligent in regard to his daughter's association with a man like Sir John Gale. On the other hand, many persons (especially matrons of Mrs. Begbie's stamp) declared that bolts and bars would not have sufficed to keep Veronica Levincourt in respectable obscurity; that they had always known, always seen, always prophesied, how it would end; that the girl's vanity and coquetry had long made them cautious of permitting her to associate with their daughters; and that it was all very well to blame the man—of course he was a wretch! no doubt of it!—but he must have been regularly hunted down, you know, by that artful, abandoned, dreadful, *dreadful* girl!

"There's nothing so cruel as the cruelty of one woman to another!" said Hugh, after recounting some of these sayings to his mother.

"Is there not?" said Mrs. Lockwood, composedly. "And Mrs. Sheardown," she pursued after a moment's pause, "is she too among the number of the cruel?"

"No; Mrs. Sheardown could not be

cruel! No, she is not cruel. But she is—even *she* is—a little hard on the girl."

"H'm! Is this Miss Levincourt so very handsome as they say? You have seen her?"

"Yes; I saw her at Lowater. She is strikingly beautiful. I do not know that I ever saw such eyes and such colouring."

"And not vain or coquettish, as these 'cruel' women say?"

"I—well, yes, I think she is fond of admiration. But her manner was very charming."

"That is charming, Hugh; that love of admiration. Masculine vanity is always tickled by the implied flattery of a pretty woman's airs and graces."

"Flattery!"

"To be sure. Haughty or espiègle, stately or languid, what a coquette wants, is *your* attention: and that flatters you. How many men, do you suppose, would think Venus herself beautiful, if she honestly did not care two straws whether they looked at her or not?"

"Well, mother, despite my 'masculine vanity,' I can truly say that I never in all my life saw a girl whom I should have been less likely to fall in love with, than Veronica Levincourt."

"That was fortunate for you!"

"Good, kind Mrs. Sheardown thought me in some danger, I believe, for she dropped a word or two of warning—. That man must be as black a scoundrel as ever existed!" cried Hugh, suddenly breaking off.

"Is the identity of Sir John Gale with Sir John Tallis known in Shipley?"

"Yes; I had learned it from your letters. But except to the Sheardowns, I said no word of the matter. But an old woman who was staying at Dr. Begbie's—a certain Betsy Boyce—wrote up to some gossip-mongering crony in London for information about Sir John Gale. And in that way, the whole story became known."

"Of course you did not see Mr. Levincourt again?"

"No one has seen him except his own servants and little Plew, the surgeon, since his daughter's flight."

"Not even in church?"

"Oh in church, of course, he has been seen. The Sheardowns purposely stayed away from St. Gildas the first Sunday after the vicar's return. But I was told that the rustics, who compose the majority of the congregation, behaved with more *delicacy* than might have been expected

from them. They kept out of the vicar's way on leaving church; and those who did see him, contented themselves with silently touching their hats, and passing on. By the way, the person who told me all this, is horribly cut up by this dreadful affair. It is a certain Mr. Plew, a surgeon, and a really good little fellow. The village gossips say that he was a bond-slave of Miss Levincourt. I never saw a man look more miserable. He fought her battles tooth and nail, until it became known that Sir John Gale had a wife already. Then of course there was no more to be said of the girl's being married to him. But although Plew is the mildest looking little fellow you ever saw, I should not care to be in the shoes of any man who spoke an ill word of Miss Levincourt in his presence. And the Shipley folks understand this so well, that if a group of them are discussing the vicar's daughter, they break off at Plew's approach as though he were her brother. He is a loyal little fellow, and I am sorry for him with all my heart."

"He must be a very uncommon sort of man," observed Mrs. Lockwood, dryly.

"Ah, mother, mother!" exclaimed Hugh, kissing her forehead, and looking at her half fondly, half sadly, "our old quarrel! I cannot understand how it is that such a good woman as you are should find it so hard to believe in goodness!"

WHICH IS WHICH?

Most readers will be familiar with an amusing paper in Washington Irving's Sketch-Book, suggested by a visit to the Reading Room of the British Museum, in which the authors of a bygone age are represented as stepping down bodily from the canvases on which they are depicted, and rescuing, *vi et armis*, the vestures which modern artificers of books are purloining from them. It would be idle to deny the justice of the satire, yet should one, in some dyspeptic mood, seek to realise the scene thus suggested, he would not long have his attention confined to the conflict of ancient versus modern, dead versus living writers. There would be many a sore tussle among the animated canvases themselves. One can readily imagine a fierce duel occurring over some trope or metaphor between two of the resuscitated claimants. In some cases there would be a complete *mêlée*, and the bantering idea would stand bewildered, wondering who was its own true-begotten father.

The flower she trod on dipt and rose,
And turn'd to look at her,

is the graceful manner in which the Laureate tells us that a certain young woman, hight

Olivia, asserts her superiority to the ordinary laws of matter. The pleasing hyperbole will not pass unchallenged. "Mine," says he of Abbotsford, "tho' I will confess you have clad my dainty lass in a becoming garb. It was I who sang:

"E'en the slight harebell raised its head
Elastic from her airy tread."

But a big burly man, with scorbutic visage and slovenly dress, and swearing the legiblest of any man christen'd, takes the trembling idea under his cloak: "Arcades ambo! The wench is mine! Did ye never read, then, my Sad Shepherdess, wherein I sang:

"Her treading would not bend a blade of grass,
Or shake the downy blowball from its stalk?"

Yea, and in my Vision of Delight, stands it not fairly writ:

"... thence did Venus learn to lead
The Idalian bands, and so to tread
As if the wind, not she, did walk,
Nor prest a flower, nor bow'd a stalk?"

Almost simultaneously with Ben's claim, comes the silver voice of him who sang the fæ of man and the conflict of the warrior angels, with Sabrina's song:

Thus I set my printless feet
O'er the cowslip's velvet head,
That bends not as I tread.

"By the mass, then," exclaims another, one Dabridgecourt Belchier, "ye are all wrong! In my comedy of Hans Beer-pot, acted in the Low Countries by an honest company of health-drinkers, I wrote:

"With that she rose like nimble roe,
The tender grass scarce bending."

The clamour thickens, but a musical laugh breaks in on the controversy, and a bland face smiles upon the wordy storm. "Mine, I think, my masters," says the Bard of Avon. "Ere my muse was in her teens, in the first heir of my invention, I wrote:

"The grass stoops not, she treads on it so light."

There is a momentary lull, but again the murmur swells, fresh claimants springing up like the warriors from Cadmean teeth.

It would be unfair to characterise these coincidences as plagiarisms. As in the case of the instance just cited, many thoughts have passed into the stock-in-trade of versifiers, and can as little claim an only parent as the immemorial rhymes of *love* and *dove*. Oftentimes, too, the same idea must have occurred independently to different writers; and it is rather matter of wonder, seeing how many minds have been bent to illustrate man's inner life—the passions by which his soul is swayed, his fears, his longings, his unrest, his joys and sorrows—that thoughts and images are so seldom repeated. In many cases, however, where such coincidences occur, and probably in the majority, that which at first sight would suggest the idea of plagiarism, is but an unconscious echo. A book is taken up casually, or a quotation is made in the hours of social

intercourse; the mind seizes upon it, stores it for further reflection; it is for the time forgotten, and when next it forces itself upon the thoughts of the recipient is welcomed as the indigenous growth of his own mind, and is unhesitatingly employed, with as little recollection of its origin as desire to appropriate another's due.

Some of these minor coincidences are curious. Here are a few, culled almost at random:

Few quotations are more hackneyed than a line from Milton's *Lycidas*: a poem which, it will be remembered, was written in 1637:

Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise
(That last infirmity of noble mind.)

Three years earlier, when Milton was a young man of six-and-twenty, and had probably not merged his love for the "well-trod stage" in the fierce earnestness of the great struggle that was then impending, there was licensed a comedy by Philip Massinger, called *A Very Woman*, where (Act V., Scene 4—Paulo, loq.) occurs the noticeable parallelism, of which it seems not improbable that Milton's line might have been the echo:

Tho' the desire of fame be the last weakness
Wise men put off.

Another line, which, with myriads from the same exhaustless store of wit and wisdom, has passed into a current household word, has a close parallel in Lord Bacon's *Essays*. Polonius, in the precepts which he lays down for the guidance of Laertes on the occasion of his return to France, emphasises the crowning injunction

... to thine own self be true;
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.

Bacon's *Essays*, which, as he himself tells us, come home to men's business and bosoms, were published six years earlier than the first sketch of *Hamlet*. Shakespeare can scarcely be supposed not to have read there (*Essay* xxiii.), "Be so true to thyself that thou be not false to others." To this sentence, surely, Bacon's remark on the *Essays* generally, will apply: "Tho' the piece be small, the silver is good."

In the case of a man like Gray, who wrote so little, and who polished with such elaborate care the little that he did produce, we should not be disposed to seek for such a repetition of familiar images as more prolific writers would with difficulty avoid. The tiny volume, nevertheless, which comprises the poetical works of the author of the *Elegy*, will supply more than one example. In *The Bard*, for instance, occurs the line,

Dear as the ruddy drops which warm my heart:
which is scarcely altered from Julius Cæsar:

You are my true and honourable wife,
As dear to me as are the ruddy drops
That visit my sad heart.

The source from which Gray's line was derived, if, indeed, it were derived at all, precludes the notion of an intentional appropriation. It has long been tolerably safe to purloin

from Cowley, or Drayton, or Donne, or the less familiar of the Elizabethan dramatists; but for a conscious plagiarist to adopt the words of Shakespeare, were to court detection. Hence we cannot but believe that Professor Aytoun in penning the quatrain, in his *Bothwell*:

I thought of her as of a star
Within the heavens above,
That such as I might gaze upon
But never dare to love—

had forgotten that Helena, in *All's Well that Ends Well*, employs the same figure in speaking of Bertram:

It were all one
That I should love a bright particular star
And think to win it: he is so above me.

Lord Byron, probably, wrote the line in his *Bride of Abydos*, for which he has been censured by critics,

The mind, the music breathing from her face,
in forgetfulness of Lovelace's well-known lines:

O could you view the melody
Of every grace,
And music of her face,
You'd drop a tear,
Seeing more harmony
In her bright eye
Than now you hear.

A similar expression has been used by Lord Lytton in his *Pilgrims of the Rhine*.

If ever poet lived, whose fertile imagination and wealth of lovely words and images render the idea of plagiarism ridiculous, it is surely our Laureate. Yet there seems to be an echo of Antony and Cleopatra,

The April's in her eyes,
in a beautiful and frequently quoted line of *In Memoriam*:

Make April of her tender eyes.

And in a passage of the *Gardener's Daughter* there is a reproduction of a fine thought in *Serjeant Talfourd's Massacre of Glencoe*:

. . . is joy so hearted
That it can find no colour in the range
Of gladness to express it: so accepts
A solemn hue from grief.

The corresponding passage in Tennyson is:

Sighs
Which perfect Joy, perplex'd for utterance
Stole from her sister Sorrow.

Every one will recollect a passage in the *Princess*, when, issuing from the schools of that fair she-world where the violet-hooded doctors had led their gentle pupils to all springs of knowledge, the three intruders discuss the scenes through which they have just past.

"Why, sirs," exclaims the prince:

"they do all this as well as we!"
"They hunt old trails," said Cyril, "very well,
But when did woman ever yet invent?"

A similar passage in Archbishop Whately is less familiar: "It does seem that women have little of inventive power. They learn readily; but very rarely invent anything of importance. I have long sought for some instances of in-

vention or discovery by a woman, and the best I have been able to find is Thwaites' soda-water."

In this same poem, the *Princess*, there occurs a passage which is very suggestive of *Otway*. The prince making such excuses as he might for having ventured within the prescribed limits, urges the resistless force of the passion that impelled him:

Who desire you more
Than growing boys their manhood; dying lips,
With many thousand matters left to do,
The breath of life; O more than poor men's wealth, &c.
Similarly Polydore, in urging his suit to Monimia, exclaims,

If to desire you more than misers' wealth
Or dying men an hour of added life.

In the *Idylls*, Guinevere's passion after the angry interview in which she made such short work of the great knight's "nine-years'-fought-for diamonds," is thus described:

Sea was her wrath yet working after storm,
which closely resembles a line in that tragedy which Dryden, with some self-complacency, described as "the most correct of his," but which has long ceased to find readers:

Sorrow in its waning Form:
A working Sea remaining from a Storm.
AURENG-ZEBB. Act. IV., Sc. 1.

An idea which occurs twice in *Maud*, has done duty, with variations, for centuries:

Her feet have touch'd the meadows
And left the daisies rosy—

a magical property which develops itself in a manner, even more remarkable, somewhat later. The passage is the most exquisitely lyrical and probably the best known in the poem:

He sets the jewel print of your feet
In violets blue as your eyes.

Monimia, in the *Orphan*, ascribes a similar virtue to the footsteps of Castalia:

Flowers spring where'er he treads.

In Drayton's *Quest of Cynthia*, the touch of the lady's foot, though it did not cause flowers to spring, imparted to them beauty and vitality:

The flowers which it had prest
Appeared to my view
More fresh and lovely than the rest
That in the meadows grew.

And similarly, in his *Epistle to Fair Rosmond*, King Henry is made to say:

. . . if thy foot touch hemlock as it goes,
That hemlock's made far sweeter than the rose.

This is, surely, better than deepening the crimson fringes of the little flower *Chancer* loved so well. The same idea is to be found in that exquisite fragment, the *Sad Shepherd*: doubly precious to us, because it shows that the rare genius who conceived it, amid the gloom which surrounded his later years, yet kept his heart hale and his imagination green:

Here was she wont to go! and here, and here!
Just where these daisies, pinks, and violets grow,
The world may find the spring by following her.

Where she went the flowers took thickest root,
As she had sow'd them with her odorous foot.

When Herrick wrote:

Her pretty feet like snails did creep
A little out,

he was probably consciously stealing from Sir John Suckling's Ballad upon a Wedding. In doing so, he has afforded an illustration of Samuel Butler's remark, that a plagiarist is like an Italian thief, who never robs but he murders too, in order to prevent discovery. The corresponding passage in the earlier poet is far more delicate and graceful:

Her feet beneath her petticoat
Like little mice stole in and out,
As if they fear'd the light.

Since Milton's obligations to the Sad Shepherdess are evident throughout his *Comus*, it will scarcely be doubted that in his *Il Penseroso* he designedly made use of the song in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Nice Valour*. The resemblance is too striking to be attributable to mere chance, or to an "unconscious echo." Milton's lines are too familiar to need quotation; the prototype runs thus:

Menas all you vain delights,
As short as are the nights
Wherein you spend your folly.
There's nought in this life sweet,
If man were wise to see't,
But only melancholy.

Nor can we readily believe that Pope was ignorant of the source of the line, almost a proverb among us—

He can't be wrong whose life is in the right:
which is to be found in Cowley's poem on *Cra-shaw*:

His faith perhaps in some nice tenets might
Be wrong: his life, I'm sure, was in the right:

It would not be difficult to extend almost indefinitely such a list as this, were it desirable to do so. But it is, after all, a very trivial matter, and few readers would care to pursue the subject to the end of a paper comprising the results of only a very moderate amount of diligence. Lest any one who should have accompanied me thus far should exclaim, with Browning's visitor to the Conventicle:

... like Eve, when she plucked the apple,
I wanted a taste, and now there's enough of it,

I will append only one more instance. The passages are from Shakespeare and Massinger:

What should be in that Caesar?
Why should that name be sounded more than yours?
Write them together, yours is as fair a name;
Sound them, it doth become the mouth as well;
Compare with them, &c.

JULIUS CESAR.

What is he?

At his best but a patrician of Rome—
His name, Titus Flaminius; and speak mine,
Berecinthus, arch-flamen to Cybele;
It makes as great a sound.

BELIEVE AS YOU LIST.

The poets from whom these instances have

been selected, all stand too high for their fame to be in any way affected by them, even were they much more numerous and their connexion much more evident. We owe too much to these men, each and all, to carp at minute blemishes, even were we disposed to consider such coincidences as defects. It is not that we regard them lightly that we dwell upon points so microscopic; but, holding their words dear, and cherishing them as a friend's voice, the thinnest, faintest echo strikes upon an ear, which, were its sense not sharpened by affection, would be deaf to louder noises.

AN OLD BALLAD RE-WITTEN.

ANNAN WATER.

"ANNAN water's roaring deep,
But my love Annie's wondrous bonny;
I'm loath that she should wet her feet,
For, oh! I love her best of ony.

"Go saddle me the bonny black,
Go saddle, quick, and make him ready;
For I will down the Gatehope Slack
And see my winsome little lady.

"And saddle me the bonny grey,
I'll lead her till the black is weary;
And fill me up a cup of wine,
For, eh! the storm is loud and dreary.

"I vowed to dance with her to-night,
I swore it on the lips of Annie;
I swore it with her hand in mine,
And not by one oath, but by many.

"Though Annan water ran with gold,
And I could scoop it out at leisure,
I'd give it all to have to-night
Two honey kisses from my treasure."

He's leaped upon his bonny black,
From either spur the blood was flying;
But ere he won the Gatehope Slack,
The horse was not an hour from dying.

And louder grew the angry Clyde,
From bank to brae the waters pouring;
They hungered for a drowning man;
'Twas for more food that they were roaring.

He's leaped upon the bonny grey,
He rode as straight and fair as any;
And he would neither halt nor stay,
For he was seeking bonny Annie.

He's ridden fast o'er field and fell,
Through moss and moor, and pool and mire;
His spurs with red were dripping fast,
And from her steel hoofs flashed the fire.

"Now, bonny grey, now play your part,
If ye're the steed to win my deary,
On corn and hay ye'll live for aye,
And never spur shall make you weary."

The grey she was of right good blood,
But when she reached the nearest ford,
She couldn't have gone a furlong more
Though you had smote her with a sword.

"O, boatman, boatman, bring your boat!
I'll give yon man good golden money
To put me o'er the darkening stream,
For I must cross to see my honey.

"I swore an oath to her last night,
And not one oath alone, but many,
That though it rained a stream of fire,
I'd cross and see my winsome Annie."

The sides are steep, the flood is deep.
From brae to bank the falls are pouring,
The bonnie grey mare sweats for fear,
To hear the Water Kelpy roaring.

He's thrown away his velvet coat,
His silver buckle, hat and feather,
He burst the waistcoat from his breast,
He threw away his broad belt leather.
He's ta'en the ford, now help him Lord!
I wot he swam both strong and steady;
But the tide was broad, his strength it failed,
He never saw his bonny lady.

"O, woe betide the willow wand,
And woe betide the brittle brier!
They broke when grasped by my love's hand,
When his strong limbs began to tire.

"Now woe betide ye, Annan stream!
This night ye are a mournful river;
Over thy floods I'll build a bridge,
That ye no more true love may sever."

THE GROWTH OF THE BAR.

WE close this subject in the present paper.

Between the ancient and the modern advocate lies the broad dark gulf of the middle ages; in whose waters, by the side of art and science, of literature and of civilisation, justice and M. le Berquier's "right of defence" lay buried. And advocacy never revived in its old splendour. For the masterpieces of ancient oratory we look to the speeches of Demosthenes or Cicero at the bar of Athens or of Rome; for those of modern, to the records of parliamentary eloquence. But it may console the barrister of the present day to reflect on the many advantages, denied to him, which his prototype possessed. The advocate of old, for example, was his own reporter. No short-hand writer of the Athenian "Chronoi," or the Roman "Vexillum," sat by to take down his every word for the next morning's issue, to appear with such omissions or improvements only as the reporter's defective knowledge or exuberant fancy might suggest. The speaker went quietly home and touched up his speech, which, to begin with, he had carefully prepared beforehand, gathering together the scattered threads, and omitting the interruptions of some obstinate dicast on the bench, or the "objections" (we may be sure there were plenty) of his "learned friend on the other side." What he didn't like he re-wrote; and more than once, if his oration, on reflection, struck him as feeble, or if it had failed of success, or if, as sometimes happened, he had delivered none at all, he quietly wrote another, as he could, might, or should have "orated" it, and published it at leisure some months afterwards, when the public had entirely forgotten what he *had really said*, and how he had said it. In

this fashion we may imagine Cicero composing his magnificent "pro Milone," and working himself into a state of admiration at the beauty of his own periods, while his unfortunate client, in whose behalf he had, as a matter of fact, broken down through nervousness, was thriving, as best he might, under sentence of transportation. Milo's remark, when he read what might have been said for him, but wasn't, is pathetic in its simplicity: "If Cicero *had* talked like this, I should not have been eating figs at Marseilles."

The advocate of ancient times, again, had a far wider scope for the exercise of tricks of the trade. It is strange enough to us, with our ideas, to reflect on the sort of argument which he was wont to address to the judges, and often with success; and of which the most historical instance was one we quoted in our first paper—the defence of Phryne. In the same way did Antony, defending the old soldier, Aquilius, unclothe his robe and show the scars of battle on his breast. Less seductive, perhaps, than in the case of Phryne, the argument proved no less successful. If an accused had a relation in distress, it was the custom to introduce him; though some judgment was required of the advocate in this respect. It happened once that one Spiridion, asking a little boy, whom he had called into court as the son of a client whom he was defending, why he wept, was answered, "Because my master has just flogged me." He had got hold of the wrong boy. Appeals to the passions were the recognised method of the orator, and their want of logic was no bar to their effect. Speaking in the open Forum, before judges who had the right, not to acquit only, but to pardon, amongst an excited audience of quick susceptibilities and theatrical imaginations, the advocate of that day had great advantages over his successor. The time that they were able to secure for previous preparation, was another advantage for the advocates of Greece and Rome. "If Demosthenes and Cicero had had to plead as often as we have," says Dupin, "they would have been neither Cicero nor Demosthenes." By these reflections we must account, and console ourselves, for, the decline of forensic eloquence; remembering at the same time how our own Erskine was able to move his public—so much that the people not only took the horses out of his carriage after one of his greatest displays, but even forgot in their enthusiasm to return them afterwards. Our age, too, has

grown too prosaic to tolerate much declamation: without which the eloquence of oratory can scarcely exist in its fulness. "Continuous eloquence," says Pascal, "is a bore."

While on the subject of contrasts of style, it may be amusing to note the difference between the advocacy of the present day and that which was in favour during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The speakers of that day, notably in France, delighted in pressing all the authors of antiquity into the service of the most everyday cause. Let us listen to Pousset de Montauban pleading for a client who denied the paternity of a child. "If formerly," he says, "husbands have been believed when they have denied children attributed to them; if Demeratus, as Herodotus tells us, was driven from his kingdom, only because Ariston, his putative father, cried, 'He is not my son!' if the Lacedæmonians preferred Agesilaus to Leotychides, in the succession, because Agis had often said that the latter was the child of Alcibiades, and not his; shall not, then, my client be believed when he says that this is not his son?" In the same speech are cited as further authorities, Horace, the Bible, St. Augustin, Plato, Tertullian, Seneca, and the Jews. It is this style of advocacy that Racine severely satirises in the *Plaideurs*:

Quand je vois les Césars, quand je vois leur fortune:
Quand je vois le soleil, et quand je vois la lune:
Quand je vois les états des Babiloniens
Transférés des serpens aux Macédoniens, &c. &c.

Out of such strange vicissitudes of style grew the modern barrister. Now-a-days, if he meddle with the classics, he is not always so much at home. De Montauban would scarcely have talked as we have heard a queen's counsel talking of the *opima spolia* of an adversary.

During the early middle ages, as far as we can pierce their darkness, the professional advocate rarely existed. We find traces of him among the Lombards and the German tribes; but "it is natural to suppose," as a French writer has said, "that at a time when justice itself had no existence, the work of the advocate was almost a nullity." To those ingenious days we must refer the origin of the stupidest and most monstrous of systems, the "trial by battle," which was not abolished in France till 1566, while, in this wonderful country of ours, the "wager of battle" had a legal existence some fifty years ago. Mr. Forsyth has extracted this account from an old French author of the manner of the proceedings in a battle

trial at the close of the thirteenth century: "The counsel for the appellant, having par les plus belles paroles et mieux ordonnées qu'il pouvoit, stated the case of his client, called upon his opponent to confess or deny the charge against him, saying, that if it was denied, his client was ready to prove it by witnesses or otherwise. He then added, 'but he will prove it in his own person, or by his champion, in the lists like a gentleman, on horseback, with arms and all other things suitable, in wager of battle, and in such case in manner conformable to his rank, and here he offers his gage.' At these words, like a fearless cavalier, he threw a glove down upon the floor. Upon this the counsel on the other side rose, and after having argued vigorously against the motion for a duel, he concluded by stoutly declaring that if the court should decide in favour of a single combat, 'my client denies what is alleged against him, and says, on the contrary, that he who has authorised the charge to be brought forward LIES; and this he is ready to maintain either in person or by champion, and thereto he pledges his gage.' The appellee then stepped forward himself; after a short address to the court, in which he said that the plaintiff lied like a villain, 'sauf l'honneur de la cour,' and that he himself adopted all that his advocate had stated in his behalf, and was ready to fight if the court should so determine, he threw down his glove also beside the other."

One would think that the advocate had little to do on these occasions but look on; but his berth was not altogether pleasant. If he were not careful of his language, but identified himself too warmly with his client, he might be called upon to fight himself, as happened to one De Fabrefort, in the fourteenth century. Having demanded battle, without saying in express words that he demanded it for his client, he had the greatest difficulty in escaping personal encounter; whereat the people in the court laughed consumedly.

It is amusing to think of our sergeants-at-law, in England, "giving a knee" to their clients in a trial by battle. But such was the arrangement in the old days; and we may find in Blackstone and other old authorities, accounts of the manner in which the combat was waged, after the same fashion as in France. Whether or no a case should be settled by fighting, was a preliminary point for argument; and it is an absolute fact that judgment was given

for wager by battle in the Court of Queen's Bench, in the year 1818.

Though trial by battle is now a thing of the past, the simplicity of mediæval advocacy still survives in some parts of the world. For instance, M. le Berquier is our authority for saying that, in Persia, things are still unchanged since the end of the seventeenth century, when a French traveller in that part of the world, the Chevalier Chardin, was much astonished by the local methods of procedure. The parties to a suit pleaded their own cause: standing if they were of the common people; sitting if they were of rank; and made such a noise about it, that the judge would often put his hand to his head, and cry "Gaugamicouri" (you chew dung): whereupon if they refused to be quiet, the judge ordered an usher of the court to hit each party over the nape of the neck and the back. In contrast with this primitive method we may take the Austrian system, as it existed until the reconstruction of the bar of that country last year only, which narrowed and confined the office of the advocate by rules of the most absurd formality. Twenty conditions were required for a "complete proof," which might be accomplished by a mathematical arrangement of "half-proofs," and "second half-proofs." "Five combinations of methods of proof," wrote one of their professors "constitute a half-proof of the first degree; to make a second half-proof, there is the supplementary oath, a doubtful witness, or a damaged witness. Lower than the half-proof is the 'presumption,' which has no foundation in law." Touchstone, one would think, must have studied for the Austrian bar. M. le Berquier, who in the book we have so often cited gives a brief summary of his observation of the foreign systems of advocacy, represents the Germans generally in a most unfavourable light in that respect, and quotes a Bavarian magistrate's account of his own country. "Scarcely have the advocates come into court," he says, "than all their good feelings leave them; love of truth, conscience, reason, honesty, good faith, all disappear. In following their profession, they hold themselves absolutely free of all obligation to honesty, and lie without the slightest embarrassment, or the smallest scruple, on the strength of old custom and usage." But professional advocacy has never flourished in Germany; in Russia it had no existence till 1866, until which date all proceedings, civil and criminal, were conducted and decided in the strictest secrecy.

The first signs of the revival of advocacy as a profession during the middle ages are to be sought in the records of the famous "Assises de Jerusalem," when Godfrey de Bouillon ascended the throne of Jerusalem at the end of the eleventh century, and founded on existing custom and usage a complete code of laws. By that code the advocate became once more an institution. Two courts of justice, the High Court and the Court of the Commons, were established by Godfrey's code; and for the functions and management of each—the one constituted for the nobles, and the other for the people—various rules were laid down. In the High Court, a litigant might appear in person or by counsel. If he preferred the latter, he applied to the president to assign to him the best pleader attached to the court; and even if he were himself an advocate, might ask for another to help him. The king, it seems, had special advocates of his own; but, those excepted, any counsellor demanded was assigned. In the Court of Commons, the parties were not only allowed, but constrained, to appear by counsel. For the guidance of the advocate many directions were given; he was enjoined to plead "wisely, legally, and courteously," he was to be a man of sense, and to keep his wits about him; he was not to be shy, or careless, or inattentive; neither for fear of shame or loss, nor for gift or promise, was he to refrain from giving the best advice he could to the client to whom he was assigned. And finally he was blandly assured that "the more he knew the better advocate he would be." It is further worthy of note, that special instructions were given to such counsel as should appear in a trial for murder, on behalf of the "next friend" of the murdered person. The advocate's fee was to be "according to the conveniences which he had done to the party;" of the extent of which it does not appear, however, whether the advocate or the party was to be the judge.

We have more than once alluded to France as the country where, though far more fettered by rules and ordinances than in England, the bar has been held in the highest honour and achieved in modern times the greatest fame.

Gallia caudidiora docuit facunda Britannos.

And it is no matter of wonder that she should. That sparkling language—the despair of the *μεινους ἀνέρωτοι* of all other races who court literary, social, or oratorical distinction in less flexible and

heavier tongues, and take their one revenge in poetry—should inspire, one would think, the most tremulous of juniors with fluency and boldness. Greatest of all qualifications of the advocate—rather may we say, summary of the advocate's art—who ever rivalled a Frenchman in the "gift of the gab?" So it was that the possessor of this mighty gift in France won, in very early days, a position and an importance that the professional advocate has never had elsewhere. They did everything, these French barristers. There was one who became a pope, under the style of Clement the Fourth, and another who was made (the very last dignity one might expect an advocate to achieve) a saint, canonised, we may be sure, with a flawless patent of sanctity. D'Aguesseau, Pasquier, Berryer, are at different times among the foremost names of the French "tableau," or roll of the bar; and if we look further for quaint distinction, we shall find in France the very youngest barrister on record, in the shape of one Corbin, who appeared in court and conducted a cause with much skill and eloquence at the mature age of fourteen. This was an exception, no doubt; but life began earlier in those days. D'Aguesseau made his bow as an advocate-general at twenty-three; and Pasquier nearly left the bar in disgust because he had to wait for two months in a state of brieflessness. The present day, which regards a barrister of forty-five as little better than a babe in the law, has less sympathy with the latter part of Fuller's maxim, that "Physicians, like beer, are best when they are old; and lawyers, like bread, when they are young and new."

The first French advocates were the clergy—"nullus caudicus nisi clericus," was the motto of the day—who characteristically distinguished themselves by making what we may call their first corporate appearance as defenders of the royal prerogative against the encroachments of the Holy See. It is somewhat startling to read of a young lawyer, at the beginning of the fourteenth century, drawing up a short address to Pope Boniface the Eighth, in answer to a claim of ecclesiastical patronage in France, with this brief opening, "*Sciat tua maxima fatuitas*," i. e., "Let your honourable idiocy be informed." Whilst the parliaments of France continued to move from place to place, the advocates moved with them, on a sort of circuit; the pleading of causes being part of the business of the parliament.

We must think of the advocate of those

days as employed on the civil side only: his employment in criminal cases is a very modern institution in France; as, to our shame be it spoken, in grave cases is true in England also. It was in the reign of Philip the Fair, that the parliament, and with it the bar of France, was fixed in Paris; and the advocate's office grew rapidly in honour and importance. At first attached to the parliament as a sort of "*amicus curiæ*" to explain the law to the fighting gentlemen who formed the court, he was soon found too useful to be excluded from a personal share in the deliberations; and the next step was to raise the lawyer to the soldier's level by making of him a "*chevalier ès lois*." Philip the Fair was the first to knight his foremost barristers; and to bestow upon them the honours of nobility. And it is an amusing comment on the characteristics of the profession, ever masters in the art of making ells out of inches, to find that by the middle of the fourteenth century they had succeeded in establishing their right as a body to the privileges of the "*noblesse*," to which they had strictly no sort of claim. By this time they had dubbed themselves an "*order*," and vindicated their literal title to the proud designation of "*noblesse de la robe*," while at about the same date the bar, by gradual divorcement had separated herself from the church. The glories of the French bar culminated in the age of Louis the Fourteenth, when the honours of advocacy were transmitted from father to son, and regarded as a great source of legitimate pride.

Amongst its many vicissitudes the greatest that befel the bar of France was in the stormy times of the Revolution; for, by a decree of the second of September, 1790, the National Assembly simply abolished it altogether, duties, rights, dress, name, honours, and all, and substituted a class of *procureurs*, under the name of "*official defenders*." To do the National Assembly justice, it is clear from the report of the select committee on which they acted, that they believed that they were by this measure advancing the ends of justice; and it speaks highly for the French bar at that period that they accepted their own annihilation gladly, in preference to the degradation which they anticipated for their ancient order under the new régime. One voice was heard in the Assembly, almost alone, pleading in impassioned language for the maintenance of the advocate's office. "Whose is the right to defend our citizens? Their own, or theirs

in whom they trust. This right is based on the first principles of reason and of justice, the essential and indefeasible right of natural defence. If you prevent my defending my honour, liberty, and life, by my own voice, when I will and when I can, and, when that fails me, by his whom I believe to be the most enlightened, virtuous, upright, and the most careful of my interests, then you are violating at once this holy law of nature and of justice, and all the principles of social order." The man who so spoke was called Maximilian Robespierre!

In 1804, much against his will (for he had no love for lawyers), Napoleon decreed the restoration of the order, though he altogether declined to trust such pestilent fellows with free liberty of speech; making rules for them as strict as any that had been laid down by St. Louis, and much of the same kind. We will cite part of one of these rules, now in force, before parting with the French advocate: "We forbid the advocates to be insolently or offensively personal to the opposite party or his counsel, and to make any grave charge against their honour and reputation, unless the necessity of the case requires it; and they are expressly instructed in writing to make such charge, by their clients, or their clients' attorneys." One other quotation may be appended, from an ordinance of 1822: "Any attack an advocate may be induced to make in his pleading, or in writing, upon religion, the principles of the monarchy, the charter, the laws of the kingdom, or upon established authorities, shall be immediately suppressed by the court."

The right of being represented by counsel in criminal cases, declared illegal by Chancellor Poyet, about the middle of the sixteenth century, at which date entire secrecy of procedure was introduced into the French criminal code—a system confirmed a hundred-and-fifty years later, on a general revision of the law—is, as we have said, of recent origin in France; but in spite of the law, the judges as a rule seem always to have permitted, where they could, some communication between a prisoner and an advocate, though the latter might not appear in behalf of the accused. Our English system, notwithstanding, M. le Berquier's theories of the right of defence, which in this free country ought according to him to have been universally recognised, offers a close parallel to this. It is all very well for a French writer, extolling *the land of liberty* at the expense of his *own*, to be enthusiastic over the autonomy

of the English bar, and its glorious results; but until the revolution of 1688, our system of criminal law, if system it can be called (and it is in criminal trials that justice claims the fullest deliberation, and advocacy has its widest field), was a horror to think upon. It is bad enough now; divorced in most of its principles from common sense and reason, but then! "It would be difficult to name a trial," writes Phillips in his preface to the State Trials, "not marked by some violation of the first principles of criminal justice." Until 1695, no counsel was allowed to any man accused of "treason," or "felony," in any shape, but in cases of "misdemeanour" alone, "unless some points of law arose proper to be debated." Even Jeffreys felt the wickedness of the system. "I think it is a hard case," he said, "that a man should have counsel to defend himself for a twopenny trespass, and his witnesses examined upon oath; but if he steal, commit murder, or felony, nay, high treason, where life, estate, honour, and all are concerned, he shall neither have counsel nor his witnesses examined upon oath."

In 1695, the first reform was effected, and the assistance of counsel was allowed in cases of high treason of what we may call the first class. And the act being appointed to take effect from the 25th of March in the ensuing year, Sir William Parkyn was tried before Chief Justice Holt on the 24th of the same month, and refused the aid of counsel by that upright judge on the ground that he must proceed "according to what the law is, and not what it will be;" a postponement of the case for a day being prayed in vain. Fifty years passed before the provisions of the statute of 1695 were extended to all cases of treason; while for charges of ordinary felony prisoners were refused professional aid until, in legal phraseology, the "sixth and seventh" of William the Fourth; when, on the ground that "it is just and reasonable that persons accused of offences against the law should be enabled to make their full answer and defence to all that is alleged against them," the last, let us hope not the final, reform in the direction of common sense was made. Shall we live, any of us—will any Englishman ever live—to see the full recognition in this country of the startling theory, that the main object of trying a man for a crime is to find out whether he committed it or not? And that the best way to find it out would be to ask the prisoner himself a few questions on the subject, within limits

which would not be very difficult to fix? If he were innocent, he would wish to be questioned; if guilty, he would not; but that is argument enough, apparently, for letting ill alone. For a crafty murderer might be convicted out of his own mouth, and his crime brought home to him without any difficulty or complication whatever. And what a very dreadful thing that would be. We have often been amused, half in sadness, by watching the eagerness with which our judges (to whose unvarying and patient human kindness, in criminal trials, no testimony too strong can be borne) avail themselves of the loophole granted them sometimes whereby to creep out of this monstrous anomaly. An undefended prisoner, without a friend to speak for him, addresses the jury in his own defence. By rule, he should confine himself to comments on the evidence; for his story should be worth nothing unless he can call witnesses to prove it. But he doesn't know that, and delivers his round, unvarnished tale. The judge should stop him, but does not; and more than once we have seen a prisoner acquitted, with the full approval of all in court, on the strength of this most improper description of defence, so completely has the manner of it conveyed conviction of its truth.

The narrow limits by which advocacy was so long confined in England go far to account for the fact that we noted at the beginning of our last paper, that forensic eloquence has been comparatively rare among us—till the end of last century almost unknown. Criminal defences are the advocate's great opportunity; and here again, to recur to our opening observations, the Roman and the Greek had the better of us. All their great displays were in that line. Cicero would not have made so much of an action for trespass, or Demosthenes of a case of ejectment, as they did of their Milos and Ctesiphons; though they would probably have shown great ingenuity in following such instructions as are said to have been given to counsel by a defendant who acknowledged that he had no case: "Abuse plaintiff's attorney." The famous State Trials (from which Mr. Forsyth has made some most interesting selections) contain many speeches good, bad, and indifferent; but for anything like a high order of oratory we look in vain. Plenty of sound sense, of ingenious argument, of subtle pleading, and of good old English; and many an appeal touching in its straightforward and manly simplicity, from prisoners denied any help

but their own, is recorded there; but little besides, though even in their limited range, and in the most truckling times, there were not wanting advocates to win themselves a name for courageous zeal in the interests of the clients for whom they were only allowed to speak on such "points of law as might arise proper to be debated." "I am pleading," said Hale, when threatened by the law officer of the crown for speaking against the government, on the trial of Lord Craven, "in defence of laws which you are bound to maintain. I am doing justice to my client, and am not to be intimidated."

The advocate, such as he was in his "civil side" capacity, was an old institution in this country; and we find him distinguishing himself by his "quirks and quillies" in the days of William Rufus. In the reign of Henry the Third, John Mansel gained such influence over the councils of the king, that he "stopped the mouths of all the judges and pleaders," much to the discomfort of the monks of St. Albans amongst other people. As in France, the advocates of those days were the clergy. And it is worth remark, that to that fact some have traced the origin of that time-honoured monstrosity, the lawyer's wig. It was at the beginning of the reign of Henry the Third, that the clergy were first inhibited from practice as advocates, except in their own behalf, or that of destitute people, gratuitous causes in short, and to evade this rule and conceal the fact of their profession, it is said they invented the wig as a covering for the bald tonsure: ingenious as ever in such plausible devices. And it happened once that an advocate, charged with malpractices in his profession, had the audacity to claim the benefit of clergy, pulling off his wig in open court to show his shaven crown. Perhaps he had broken the provisions of a statute passed about that time (1275) which condemned to be imprisoned for a year and a day, and to be afterwards "disbarred," as we should now call it, any "serjeant, countor (i.e. pleader) or others," who should "do any manner of deceit or collusion in the king's court, or consent unto it, in deceit of the court, or to beguile the court." This statute is almost a solitary instance of interference with the autonomy of the English bar; though in an old book called the *Miroir des Justices*, there are various rules, on what authority based does not appear, for the guidance of the advocate. The pleader was charged not to maintain anything he knew to be false,

to give no false evidence or false pleas, to consent to no tricks or corruption. Among these and other things we find that he was to be suspended if he took fees on both sides. It is astonishing how similar in all countries and ages, are the temptations that seem to beset the advocate. This was Demosthenes in re Phormio repeated.

We have left ourselves no space to do more than bow in parting, to the worthy brotherhood of serjeants-at-law, the most ancient and honoured of leading English advocates, before the now greater Queen's counsel was known. They seem to have been the most favoured class of men in the kingdom at one time, and though the old records do not tell us much of all that they said, they are eloquent of all that they ate. The newly-installed serjeant was first called upon to feast on spiced bread, comfits, and hippocras, "with other goodly conceits," after which, having "counted upon his wits," he proceeded to feed again for the space of a week: and on one occasion Henry the Eighth and one of his queens (probably *not* she who survived him) dined with the new serjeants. They stayed for one day, but the serjeants kept it up for four more.

Thus did the serjeants of old "eat their terms," and on such fare did the professional advocate grow up in England. We cannot part with him on pleasanter terms, or find matter for more complacent thought than his brave conservatism. The times are changed, but he is changed in them as little as may be. Let other men, in professions where special acquirements seem to the superficial to be less an object, be competitively examined on all hands; the barrister preserves, "while creeds and civilisations rise and fall," his proud autonomy. Hippocras and comfits are things of the past, and the conceits of the Temple kitchens may not be always goodly; but, now as in the olden days, the young Hortensius of England, making his way to the bar, is chiefly called upon—to Eat.

WAIFS.

If I pick up a sovereign in the street, an old relic behind a sliding panel, or a purse lying unclaimed on the counter or floor of a shop; if I buy an old Bible with a concealed bank-note in the cover, or dig up a parcel of old coins in a field, or discover a bag without an owner in a railway carriage; if I strike a vein of precious metal in a quartz rock, or descry glittering particles of pure gold in alluvial sands, or take home with me a poor dog who *has lost his master*; am I, in these cases, or

any of them, to claim the property as my own? And if in any, in which?

As to the metallic treasures which lie underground, simply because they have never been dug up, they come under the operation of laws relating to mining; but treasures "found," under all the various meanings of this word, are subject to very curious contentions as to ownership. Because I find something, it does not necessarily follow that the something belongs to me. In some countries a custom has been adopted of awarding such treasures to the sovereign; in others, of dividing them between the finder of the article and the owner of the land whereon found; while in Denmark, where antiquarian relics are numerous and valuable, in affording illustrations of Scandinavian history and usages, a recent law compels the finder of such property to give it up to the crown, on condition of receiving an equivalent in money. In old times, the monarchs of England claimed ownership of any relics or treasures found in the ruins of despoiled and deserted abbeys and monasteries. James the First, for instance, granted a patent under the great seal, "To allow to Mary Middlemore, one of the maydes of honour to our dearest consort Queen Anne, and her deputies, power and authority to enter into the Abbeyes of St. Albans, Canterbury, St. Edmundsbury, and Romsey, and into all lands, baronies, and houses within a mile belonging to such abbeyes: there to dig and search after treasure, supposed to be hidden in such places." A pretty mode of rewarding a court lady!

Many of the facts illustrating this subject are very curious. Some years ago, a bidder at an auction bought an old bureau or chest of drawers. On examining it afterwards, he discovered a secret drawer which contained gold coin and bank-notes. He unwisely talked about his good fortune; the affair came to the knowledge of the seller, who claimed restitution of the money. The curious point here, was, that neither the buyer nor the seller knew previously of the existence of the property. It was decided by a court of law that the bureau *only* was bought and sold, and that the finder must give up the money to the former owner of the bureau. Who had thus hidden the money, and when, could not be ascertained. A Bible bought at an old book-stall has been known to contain bank-notes concealed in the cover; if the buyer were to noise the fact abroad, it would depend on many niceties of evidence whether he could legally keep the money or not.

In truth, it has become a very complex affair of time, place, and circumstance, to know whether we may keep what we find. How did the article become placed where we found it? And was it on the Queen's highway? If a man voluntarily throw away property, it is no longer his; but if he *only hide* it, or if he accidentally *lose* it, he certainly does not intend to abandon all claim to it. Supposing, however, that all chance of finding the former owner must be given up, there are often many tough contests to be maintained concerning the rights of the finder.

For instance: the Queen has a claim to all gold, silver, money, and plate, found under circumstances which baffle inquiry as to the real owner. Sometimes the golden luck is disposed of before the Queen has any official notice of the matter. On one occasion, the foundations of certain old houses at Exeter having been laid bare during builders' alterations, a large collection of silver coins came to light. The workmen announced their good fortune with great jubilation. This induced the owner of the premises to make further search, which was rewarded by the discovery of a second heap of treasure—mostly coins, supposed to have been buried by some Devonshire family during the troubles of the Commonwealth. In this instance, as the crown did not put in a claim, the finders were the keepers.

Sometimes the melting down of gold and silver ornaments, found in odd nooks and corners, harasses the claim of the crown, though without vitiating it. There was a celebrated instance of this in 1863, when a labourer found a yellowish chain about half a yard long; it was just under the surface of a field near Mountfield, in Sussex. Believing it to be brass, he sold the chain for three shillings. A brother-in-law of the purchaser, having been a gold-digger in California, pronounced the chain to be of gold instead of brass; and he was right. The two men concealed this fact from the original finder; but it shortly became evident that they were unusually well supplied with money. The suspected character of the men led to their being taken into custody and examined for having in their possession money for which they could not account. It was ascertained on inquiry, that the finder of the (supposed brass) chain had sold it to them; and that a refiner in London had given them five hundred and twenty-nine pounds for a chain of solid gold weighing a hundred and fifty-three ounces. The chain was gone, melted down; but there is an almost absolute certainty that it was the self-same chain which had been found in the field. The loss was a cause of great regret to archaeologists, who had reason to believe that the chain was a Celtic relic of great rarity and interest. There was no doubt in this case that the treasure ought to have reverted to the crown; but it had found its way into the melting-pot instead.

There is a law in operation on this point, in virtue of which the Crown gives an account to the House of Commons, of the property annually obtained in this way. The money value amounts to a mere bagatelle; but still it is considered well to maintain the claim, because some of the articles found have considerable antiquarian or artistic value, and are well fitted for deposit in the British Museum or some such collection. Silver coins, heaped up together, constitute the chief items in these treasures; they were most probably hoarded by the early owners, and then forgotten. Sometimes, however, they comprise gold coins, coins of commoner metal valuable for their antiquity, ingots or bars, chains of gold or silver, and jewels. In one case the "find" was valued only as old silver, and the crown

gave it back to the finder; in some, the finders were paid the current value, and the coins were deposited in the British Museum; a gold cross and chain, found in an old castle ruin, were allotted to the queen as Duchess of Lancaster; while some very ancient silver pennies came to the Prince of Wales as Duke of Cornwall. In one instance, where a large old silver coin was found at St. Peter's, in the Isle of Thanet, the crown had some difficulty in establishing a claim, seeing that the coin was found lying on the ground, and not buried or hidden.

But the crown is not the only claimant. Many old grants, charters, and, customs give a right to the lord of the manor: especially in cases where there is a doubt whether the finding were on the surface or under the surface of the ground. There are cases, also, in which a claim may be put in by the clergyman of the parish, when the treasure is found on or in glebe land. In 1863, when a debate arose in the House of Commons on this subject of treasure trove, it was stated that the prime minister himself, Lord Palmerston, had exercised his privilege as a landowner in this way. The veteran statesman said: "It is quite true that about two years ago some workmen, when digging a drain in a meadow on one of the farms I had bought a few years previously, found a torque, an ancient British necklace or bracelet. I got it back from the person who had purchased it from the finder, the value being about eight pounds. I caused an investigation to be made of the original grant of the farm several years ago, and ascertained that it conferred on the grantee all the treasure trove on the property. I, therefore, feel authorised to keep the relic in question." No doubt: if the sovereign give up the royal claim in a particular spot, the receiver has a right to enjoy what is given. But where there is a doubt on the matter, the lawyers become sometimes engaged in legal battle. A few years ago a ploughman working in a field near Horndean, in Hants, found a hundred and forty old silver coins in an earthen pot or jar, under the surface of the ground. He took them to the lord of the manor, Sir J. C. Jervoise, who, valuing them for their antiquarian interest, gave the finder their value in present coin. But the solicitor to the Treasury appeared, requiring the lord of the manor to place the coins at the disposal of the crown. The baronet not being inclined to comply, litigation commenced, which lasted several months, and absorbed much more money than the coins were intrinsically worth.

In one remarkable instance, the lord of the manor was balked of his claim by the sudden appearance of the veritable owner of the property. A party of labourers, while grubbing up some trees near Highgate, came upon two jars containing nearly four hundred sovereigns in gold. They divided the treasure among them, and were then surprised to hear that the lord of the manor of Tufnell claimed the whole as treasure trove. Before this claim could be enforced, however, the real owner came forward. He had an odd story to tell. He was a tradesman in Clerkenwell. While

under the influence of temporary delusion a few months previously, he one night went out and buried the money in a field which seemed to him secure from intrusion. Forgetting the locality when he recovered his senses, it was suggested to him by a rumour relating to the discovery at Tufnell manor. He being able to prove these facts, and that he had hidden and not abandoned the treasure, it was restored to him.

Instances have occurred, in which the crown, the lord of the manor, and the clergyman, have fought a kind of triangular duel for the possession of found treasures. Some years ago, the large sum of four thousand pounds was found just beneath the surface of a field, near Stanmore. The money being mostly in foreign gold coins of the early part of the present century—such as French Louis d'ors and Napoleons, and Spanish doubloons,—speculation arose touching the question how such a treasure could have got into such a spot. The rector's gardener found the money; the gardener's wife told the rector's wife; the rector's wife told the rector; and the rector instituted an inquiry. Some of the older inhabitants recollected that, about the year 1815, when the continent was in a troubled state, a foreigner had come to live at Stanmore. No one knew anything of him or from whence he came; the chief fact observed relating to his sojourn in the village was that he used often to be seen walking about in one of the fields. After some time, he left the place. Two years later, another stranger made his appearance, and announced that his predecessor had buried a considerable sum of money in a field near Stanmore: at the same time sketching a ground-plan showing the exact locality where the treasure was buried; that he had afterwards died; and that his representative (the new visitor) now wished to obtain possession of it. As it used to be a frequent custom, in many countries, and especially in troubled times, to hide treasure underground, there seemed nothing absolutely incredible in this story. The stranger and the villagers, however, failed in their search; and the transaction was forgotten until the real finding brought it once more under notice. It was supposed that some alteration made in the field, by the removal of certain trees, had thrown the searchers on a wrong scent. Be this as it may, the treasure came to light in the fulness of time; and then various claimants appeared. The finders (for a second hoard had been hit upon, after the gardener's first discovery) said, "It is our's, for we found it." The rector said, "It is mine; for it was found on my glebe." The lord of the manor said, "It is mine, for it was found on my manor." The sovereign said, "It is mine; for the found treasure is of precious metal." Without detailing the course of the inquiry, and the operation of the law, suffice it to say that the claim of the crown was substantiated. If the next of kin, or the legal heir of the mysterious stranger, had come forward and proved his identity, the crown would have waived its claim: because the property had evidently *been secretly deposited*, not abandoned.

Newspaper readers find matters of this kind frequently recurring. In February of the present year, two labouring men found three golden bracelets—heavy, supposed to be of ancient British manufacture, and highly interesting to the antiquary—under the surface of the ground near Chart, in Kent. The men sold the chains, and were afterwards tried and punished when the facts became known. On another occasion, a poor man found a rare collection of old Irish silver bracelets, and sold them to a silversmith; all attempts to recover them were rendered nugatory by the haste with which the buyer had melted them down—else the antiquaries would have willingly given much more than the bullion value for them. On a recent occasion, a strong-room was being built for one of the insurance companies in Cannon-street, and a labourer found among the building rubbish twenty-nine old guineas and twenty old shillings of the reign of the Stuarts and the first three Georges. He got himself into trouble for retaining treasure which the crown promptly claimed. A year or two ago, a person picked up some bank-notes on the floor outside the counter in another person's shop; the finder claimed them, and the shopkeeper claimed them; no other claimant appeared; and under the particular circumstances of this case the law decided for the finder. Then there was the celebrated diamond-ring case. A woman named Donovan, while sorting rags for a Mr. Cohen, a rag-merchant, found a diamond-ring among the frowsy stuff. Out of this, arose a most knotty series of complications. Mrs. (or Miss) Donovan claimed the diamond-ring, because she found it; Mr. Cohen claimed it, because it was found among his rags; a pawnbroker claimed it, because he had advanced money on it, and because he doubted the finder's claim; a clothier in Houndsditch claimed it, because a youth in his employ had robbed him, and had purchased the ring with the stolen money; and a woman, or "young lady" claimed it, because the youth had given it to her. There was much bewilderment as to the order in which these several claims occurred; there was a little doubt whether the diamond-ring produced before the magistrate was the veritable one which had been found in the rags; and there was a great deal of a doubtful kind in the reputation of some of the persons concerned. After lopping off the claimants one by one, a police magistrate decided for the finder. Mrs. (or Miss) Donovan triumphed.

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF JOHN ACKLAND.

A TRUE STORY.

IN THIRTEEN CHAPTERS. CHAPTER V.

MR. CARTWRIGHT had not forgotten, before returning to Glenoak, to write to Mr. Ackland's cousin at Boston, as he had promised Judge Griffin. That letter informed Tom Ackland of his cousin's sudden impatience to leave Glenoak, in

consequence of an unfortunate incident having reference to the name of a lady at Boston, with whom the writer believed that Mr. John Ackland had been acquainted previous to her marriage. It narrated the circumstances already known to the reader, of the departure from Glenoak, the mysterious return of the horse, and the failure of Mr. Cartwright, assisted by his friend, Judge Griffin, and by the Richmond police, to discover any tidings of his late guest.

On the evening of his return to Glenoak, Mr. Cartwright was in excellent spirits. He kissed his little daughter with more than usual paternal unction, when she bade him good-night that evening.

He was pleasantly awakened next morning, by a despatch from the inn at the coach's halting town, informing him that Mr. Ackland had just sent to fetch away his luggage which had been lying there, in charge of the landlord, ever since the day on which John Ackland left Glenoak. The landlord had delivered the luggage to Mr. Ackland's messenger, on receipt of an order from Mr. Ackland which the messenger had produced, authorising him to receive it on Mr. Ackland's behalf. This order the landlord now forwarded to Mr. Cartwright, in consequence of the inquiries which that gentleman had been making with reference to Mr. Ackland. The messenger who called for the luggage had informed the landlord that he had come from Petersburg, where Mr. Ackland had been laid up by the effects of a bad accident; from which, however, he was now so far recovered that he intended to leave Petersburg early next morning, accompanied by a gentleman with whom he had been staying there, and by whom, at Mr. Ackland's request, this messenger had been sent for the luggage.

Mr. Cartwright lost no time in communicating this good news, both to his friends at Richmond, and to Mr. Ackland's cousin at Boston. In doing so, he observed that he feared Mr. Ackland could not have completely recovered from the effects of his accident—whatever it was—when he signed the order forwarded to Glenoak; for he had noticed that in the signature to this order, the usually bold and firm character of John Ackland's handwriting had become shaky and sprawling, as though he had written from a sick bed.

Now Tom Ackland was rendered so anxious, that he resolved to leave Boston in search of his cousin; and he certainly would have done so if he had not received on the following day, this letter, written in

a strange hand, and dated from Petersburg.

"My dear Tom. You will be surprised to receive from me, so soon after my last, a letter in a strange hand. And, indeed, I have a long story to tell you in explanation of this fact; but, for the sake of my kind amanuensis, as well as for my own sake (for I am still too weak to dictate a long letter), the story must be told briefly." The letter then went on to mention that Mr. John Ackland had left Glenoak sooner than he had intended at the date of his last letter to his cousin, availing himself of Mr. Cartwright's loan of a horse to catch the Charleston coach. How Cartwright had accompanied him through the plantation, and had insisted on taking a couple of guns with them, "though I assured him that I am no sportsman, my dear Tom;" how, in consequence of a shot fired suddenly by Cartwright from his saddle, at a hare which he missed, the mare on which John Ackland was riding had become rather restive, "making me feel very uncomfortable, my dear Tom;" how, after parting with Cartwright, and probably a little more than half way to his destination, at a place where there were cross-roads, Mr. Ackland had encountered a buggy with two persons in it (an English gentleman and his servant, as it afterwards turned out), and how this buggy, crossing the road at full speed close in front of his horse, had caused the horse to rear and throw him. He had immediately lost consciousness. Fortunately, the persons in the buggy saw the accident, and hastened to his assistance; the mare, in the mean while, having taken to her heels. Finding him insensible and severely injured, they had conveyed him with great care to Petersburg, whither they were going when he met them. There they obtained for him medical assistance. He believed he had been delirious for many days. He could not yet use his right arm, and he still felt a great deal of pain about the head. He was, however, sufficiently recovered to feel able to leave Petersburg, travelling easily and by slow stages. His kind friend, Mr. Forbes, the English gentleman who had taken such care of him, was going to meet his yacht at Cape Hatteras, intending to sail to the Havannah, and had kindly offered to take him in the yacht as far as Charleston. John Ackland hoped the sea voyage would do him good. They intended to start immediately—that evening or early next morning. Tom had better address all

letters for the present to the post-office, Charleston.

A few lines were added by Mr. Forbes, to whom this letter had been dictated. They described Mr. Ackland's injuries as serious, but not at all dangerous. A bad compound fracture of the right arm, broken in two places. The surgeon had at first feared that amputation might be necessary; but Mr. Forbes was happy to say that the arm had been set, and he trusted Mr. Ackland would eventually recover the use of it. There had been a severe concussion of the brain, but fortunately no fracture of the skull. Mr. Ackland had made good progress during the last week. Mr. Forbes was of opinion that Mr. Ackland was suffering in general health and spirits from the shock of the fall he had had, rather than from any organic injury.

On receipt of this letter, Tom Ackland wrote to his cousin, addressing his letter to the post-office at Charleston, and enclosing a line expressive of his thanks, &c. for Mr. Forbes, to whom he hoped John Ackland would be able to forward it. He also wrote to Mr. Cartwright, thanking that gentleman for his kind interest and exertions, and communicating to him what he had heard of his cousin from Mr. Forbes. When Cartwright mentioned the contents of this letter to Judge Griffin: "I always thought," said the judge, "that the man would turn up some how or other. We need not have taken such a deal of trouble about him." All further proceedings with a view to obtaining information about John Ackland were immediately stayed: and Mr. Cartwright made a handsome present to the police of Richmond for their "valuable assistance."

CHAPTER VI.

It was some time before Tom Ackland heard again from his cousin. When he did hear, John Ackland's letter was written by himself, but was almost illegible. He apologised for this, dwelling on the pain and difficulty with which he wrote, even with his left hand. He thought his broken arm must have been very ill set. As for business, he had not yet been able to attend to any. He would send Tom's letter to Mr. Forbes. But he really didn't know whether it would ever find him. He believed that gentleman must have left the Havannah. As for himself, he had found the journey by sea to Charleston very fatiguing, and it had done him no good. *The whole letter breathed a spirit of pro-*

found dejection. It complained much of frequent pain and constant oppression in the head. Life had become an intolerable burden. He, John Ackland, had never wished for a long life, and now desired it less than ever. He was so constantly changing his quarters (not having yet found any situation which did not horribly disagree with him), that Tom had better continue to direct his letters to the post-office.

Some expressions in the letter made Tom Ackland almost fear that John's mind had become affected. He wrote at once imploring his cousin to return to Boston if well enough to travel, and offering, if he were not, to start for Charleston at once, in order to be with him.

John Ackland, in his reply, assured his cousin that he felt quite unable to undertake the fatigue of even a much shorter journey than the journey from Charleston to Boston. He begged that Tom would not think of joining him at Charleston. He could not at present bear to see any one. Even half an hour's conversation, especially with any one he knew, excited him almost beyond endurance. He avoided the sight of human faces as much as he could. His only safety was in complete seclusion. Every one was in a conspiracy to distress and injure him. He might tell Tom, in strict confidence, that all the people in Charleston were so afraid of his setting up business in that town, that they were determined to ruin, and even to murder him if they could. There were persons (he had seen them) who followed him about, wherever he went, in order to poison the air when he was asleep; but he had been too sharp for them. The letter concluded with some quotations from Rousseau on the subject of suicide. It bore such evident traces of mental derangement, that Tom Ackland resolved to lose no time in going to Charleston. A statement which attracted his attention in the next morning's newspapers, confirmed his worst fears, and greatly increased his anxiety to arrive there.

CHAPTER VII.

At this time, some political friends of Mr. Dobbins, whose opinions had been advocated with great ability in the Richmond Courier on a subject of a question so hotly debated between North and South that it had threatened to break up the Union, invited that gentleman to a public banquet at one of the principal hotels in

Richmond. Mr. Cartwright was present at this dinner; so was Judge Griffin; so was Dr. Simpson, the brother of the magnetic young lady; so were other of John Ackland's fellow-guests at Glenoak.

The dinner was a Union dinner, the speeches were Union speeches, the event celebrated was the triumph of Union sentiment in harmony with Southern supremacy. After the great political guns had fired themselves off, the ladies were "admitted from behind the screen," toasts of gallantry and personal compliment were proposed, and the minor orators obtained a hearing. None of these was more voluble than Mr. Cartwright. He rose to propose a toast. The toast was a Union toast, for it united the absent with the present. He would invite the company to drink to the health of "Our absent friends."

At this moment Mr. Cartwright was disagreeably interrupted by a bustle and buzz of voices among the sable attendants at the door. "Order! order!" cried Judge Griffin, indignantly looking round.

"Please, Massa Judge," cried one burly nigger, bolder than his fellows, "Massa Ackland he be in de next room, and want to speak bery 'tic'lar with Massa Cartwright."

"By Jove, Cartwright! do you hear that?" exclaimed the judge. "What, Ackland? John Ackland?"

"Yessir. Massa John Ackland he be in a bustin' big hurry, and waitin' to see Massa Cartwright bery 'tic'lar."

"Why not call him in?" suggested the judge. "Every one will be happy to see him, after all the trouble he has cost some of us."

"No, no," cried Cartwright, much overcome by the surprise. "Gentlemen, I will not detain you longer. To our absent friends! And now," he added, emptying his bumper with an unsteady hand, "I am sure you will all excuse me, since it seems that one of *my* absent friends is waiting to see me."

CHAPTER VIII.

MR. CARTWRIGHT hurried to the door, and next moment found himself face to face: not with Mr. John, but with Mr. John's cousin Tom, Ackland.

Mr. Tom Ackland introduced himself: "My excuse," said he, "is, that I am only at Richmond for a few hours, on my way to Charleston, and that, accidentally hearing from one of the helps here that you happened to be in the hotel, I was anxious to ask you whether you had lately

heard from my cousin, or received any news of him from Charleston?"

"None," said Cartwright. "I trust there is nothing the matter?"

"You have not even seen his name mentioned in the newspapers?"

"No."

"Yet I presume a paragraph I have here from a Boston paper, must also have appeared in the Richmond journals. Pray be so good as to look at it."

The paragraph ran thus:

"The following has appeared in the Charleston Messenger of October 18th. On the 16th instant, about two hours after sundown, a Spanish gentleman, who happened to be walking towards Charleston along the right bank of Cooper River, was startled by what he believed to be the sound of a human voice speaking in loud tones. The voice apparently proceeded from the same side of the river as that along which he was walking, and not many yards in advance of him. As the night was already dark, he was unable to distinguish any object not immediately before him, and, as he was but imperfectly acquainted with the English tongue, he was also unable to understand what the voice was saying. He was, however, so strongly under the impression that the voice was that of a person addressing a large audience in animated tones, that he fully believed himself to be in the immediate vicinity of a camp meeting, or other similar assemblage, and was somewhat surprised to perceive no lights along that part of the bank from which the voice apparently proceeded. Whilst he was yet listening to it, the voice suddenly ceased, and was succeeded by the sound of a loud splash, as of some heavy body falling into the water. On hastening to the spot from which he supposed these sounds to have arisen, he was still more surprised to find it deserted. On examining the ground, however, as well as he could by the light of a few matches which he happened to have with him, he discovered two pieces of property, a hat and a book, but nothing which indicated the owner of them, and no trace of any struggle which could lead him to suppose that their unknown owner had been deprived of them by violence. After shouting in every direction, without obtaining any answer, this gentleman then took possession of the hat and book, and, on returning to Charleston, deposited them, with the foregoing explanation of the manner in which he had dis-

covered them, at the F.-street police-station. From the examination of these objects by the police, it appears that both the book and the hat are inscribed with the name John K. Ackland. The book, as we are informed, is the second volume of a small pocket edition of the *Nouvelle Héloïse*, and the page is turned down and marked at the following passage: 'Chercher son bien, et fuir son mal, en ce qui n'offense point autrui, c'est le droit de la nature. Quand notre vie est un mal pour nous, et n'est un bien pour personne, il est donc permis de s'en délivrer. S'il y a dans le monde une maxime évidente et certaine, je pense que c'est celle-là; et si l'on venait à bout de la renverser, il n'y a point d'action humaine dont on ne pût faire un crime.' On the margin opposite this passage something is written, but in characters which are quite illegible. The volume apparently belongs to a Boston edition. Inspector Jenks, of the Fifth Ward Police Division, has lost no time in investigating this mysterious occurrence. We understand that the river has been dragged, but without the discovery of any human body. It is to be observed that if a body, falling into the river at the spot indicated by the gentleman by whom the above-mentioned property was deposited at the F.-street station, had floated within an hour after its immersion, it is quite within possibility that it might have been carried out to sea before the following morning, that is to say, supposing it to have fallen into the river at that point, where the current is extremely strong, not later than 10.30 P.M. It is, however, extremely improbable that a human body could have been floated out to sea in this manner without being observed. It is equally improbable that any person could have perished within the neighbourhood of Charleston, whether by accident or violence, on the night of the 16th without the disappearance of that person having excited attention in some quarter up to the present moment. Our own impression is that the whole affair has been an ingenious hoax. This impression is, at least, borne out by the fact that the name of Ackland (which certainly is not a Charleston name) is not known at, and does not appear on the books of, any hotel in this city, that the advertisements of the police have, up to the present moment, elicited no claimant for the hat

and book now on view in F.-street, and that, from the inquiries hitherto made, it appears that no person in or about Charleston has been missing since the night of the 16th instant. With a view, however, to the possibility of this mysterious Mr. J. K. Ackland ever having existed, except in the imagination of some mischievous wag, Union journals are requested to copy, in order that the friends and relations of the missing gentleman (if there be any) may be made acquainted with the foregoing information."

"Well?" said Tom Ackland, when Cartwright had finished his perusal of this statement.

"Well," answered Cartwright, "I also incline to think it a hoax."

"I wish I could think so too," said Mr. Tom; "but I have many sad reasons to think more seriously of it."

"When do you go on to Charleston?" asked Mr. Cartwright.

"Before daybreak to-morrow."

"Ever been there before?"

"Never."

"Then you must let me come with you. I know something of that city, have friends there, and may be of use."

"Really, my dear sir, I could not possibly think of allowing you to sacrifice—"

"No sacrifice, sir. Nothing I would not do for the sake of your cousin, Mr. Ackland. He was once very useful to me, sir; very useful and very kind. And no man shall say that Phil Cartwright ever forgot a kindness done him. I can pack up in an hour, and the sooner we start the better."

So Mr. Cartwright accompanied Mr. Tom Ackland to Charleston. And Mr. Tom Ackland was inexpressibly touched by that proof of friendship for his cousin.

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BOOK II.

CHAPTER III. IN MR. FROST'S SANCTUM.

MESSERS. FROST AND LOVEGROVE, solicitors, had their offices in a large old house in Bedford-square. The whole of the ground-floor was used for offices. In the upper part of the house lived the family of the junior partner.

The chief reason for selecting the locality of the offices—which did not sound, Mr. Lovegrove said, an altogether "professional" address—was that he might enjoy the advantage of residing at his place of business; of being, as he was fond of mentioning, "on the spot."

"That is exactly what I *don't* want," said Mr. Frost. And accordingly he inhabited a house at Bayswater.

But the Lovegroves, especially the female Lovegroves, declared in family conclave that Mr. Frost lived at Bayswater rather than at Bedford-square, because Mrs. Frost deemed Bedford-square vulgar. She was reported to have asked where it was, with a vague air of wonder, as of an inquirer into the geography of Central Africa. And Augustus Lovegrove, junior, the only son of the family, gave an imitation of Mrs. Frost setting out to visit her husband's office, furnished with a sandwich-case and a flask of sherry, as though for a long journey; and mimicked the tone of fashionable boredom in which she asked the coachman where one changed horses to go to Bedford-square. But that, said his sisters, was only Gus's fun.

In fact, there was a suppressed, but not the less deadly, feud between the houses of Frost and Lovegrove on all social points.

In their business relations the two partners seldom jarred.

Mr. Frost was a much cleverer man than Mr. Lovegrove. He was also the better educated of the two, and nature had gifted him with a commanding person and an impressive address.

Mr. Lovegrove was a common-place individual. He said of himself that he had a great power of sticking to business: and he said truly. Mr. Frost entirely appreciated his partner's solid and unobtrusive merits. He declared Lovegrove to be "a thoroughly safe dependable fellow." And the flavour of patronage in his approbation was in no degree distasteful to Mr. Lovegrove.

In the office, their respective qualities and acquirements were the complement of each other; and they agreed admirably. Out of the office, their views were so dissimilar as to be antagonistic.

Mr. Lovegrove was a very devout high churchman, and shook his head gravely over Mr. Frost's want of orthodoxy. Indeed, to describe Mr. Frost's opinions as unorthodox was to characterise them with undue mildness. Mr. Frost was a confirmed sceptic, and his scepticism was nearly allied to cynicism.

There is a homely illustration immortalised by the pen of a great modern writer, which may, perhaps, convey an idea of the state of Mr. Frost's mind.

In one of that great writer's well-known pages, political reformers are warned when they empty the dirty water out of the tub, not to send the baby whose ablutions have been made in it floating down the kennel likewise. Get rid of the dirty water by all means: but—save the baby!

Now Mr. Frost, it was to be feared, had not saved the baby.

Then the women of the two families did

not stand in amicable relations towards each other. Mrs. Lovegrove was envious of Mrs. Frost, and Mrs. Frost was disdainful of Mrs. Lovegrove.

The two husbands would occasionally remonstrate, each with the wife of his bosom, respecting this inconvenient, not to say reprehensible, state of things; and would openly, in marital fashion, wonder why the deuce the women were so spiteful and so silly!

"I wish, Georgy," Mr. Frost would say, "that you would behave with decent civility to Lovegrove's wife when you meet her. She does not come in your way often. I think it very selfish that you will not make the least effort to oblige me, when I have told you so often how serious an inconvenience it would be to me to have any coolness with Lovegrove."

"Why can't you get on with Mrs. Frost, Sarah?" Mr. Lovegrove would ask, gravely. "I and Frost never have a word together; and two more different men you would scarcely find."

But none the less did a feeling of animosity smoulder in the breasts of the two ladies. And perhaps the chief circumstance that prevented the feeling from breaking out into a blaze, was the wide distance which separates Bayswater from Bedford-square.

At the latter place, Mr. Frost had a little private room, the last and smallest of a suite of three, opening one within the other, which looked on to a smoke-blackened yard, some five feet square. Mr. Frost had shut out the view of the opposite wall by the expedient of having his window frame filled with panes of coloured glass. This diminished the already scanty quantity of daylight that was admitted into the room. But Mr. Frost neither came to his office very early, nor remained there very late, so that his work there was done during those hours of the day in which, when the sun shone at all, he sent his beams in through the red and purple panes of the window.

It was understood in the office that when Mr. Frost closed the outer one of the green-baize double doors which shut in his private room, he was not to be disturbed save on the most pressing and important business. So long as only the inner door remained closed, Mr. Frost was accessible to six-and-eightpence-yielding mortals. But when once the weight which usually kept the outer door open was removed, and the dark green portal had swung to, with a swift

noiseless passage of the cords over their pulleys, then no clerk in the employ of the firm, scarcely even Mr. Lovegrove himself, willingly undertook the task of disturbing the privacy of the senior partner.

And yet one morning, soon after Hugh Lockwood's return to London, Mrs. Lockwood walked into the offices at Bedford-square, and required that Mr. Frost should be informed of her presence; despite the fact, carefully pointed out to her notice, that Mr. Frost's room was shut by the outer door; and that, consequently, Mr. Frost was understood to be particularly engaged.

"I feel sure that Mr. Frost would see me, if you would be good enough to take in my name," said the little woman, looking into the face of the clerk who had spoken to her.

There was something almost irresistible in the composed certainty of her manner. Neither were the ladylike neatness of her dress, and the soft, sweet, refined tone of her voice, without their influence on the young man.

"Have you an appointment?" he asked, hesitating.

"Not precisely an appointment for this special morning. But I have frequently been admitted at this hour by Mr. Frost. If you will kindly take in my name to him, I am quite willing to assume the responsibility of disturbing him."

"Well, you see, ma'am, that's just what you *can't* do. The responsibility must be on my shoulders, whether it turns out that I am doing right or wrong. However, since you say that Mr. Frost has seen you at this time, before——. Perhaps you can give me a card to take in to him."

Mrs. Lockwood took a little note-book out of her pocket, tore off a blank page, and wrote on it with the neatest of tiny pencils, the initials Z. L.

"I have no card," she said, smiling, "but if you will show Mr. Frost that paper, I think you will find that he will admit me."

The clerk disappeared, and returned in a few moments, begging the lady to step that way.

The lady did step that way, and the green-baize door closed silently behind her short, trim, black figure.

Mr. Frost was seated at a table covered with papers. On one side, and within reach of his hand, stood a small cabinet full of drawers. It was a handsome antique piece of furniture, of inlaid wood; and would have seemed more suited to a lady's

boudoir than to a lawyer's office. But there was in truth very little of what Mr. Lovegrove called "the shop" about the furniture or fittings of this tiny sanctum. The purple carpet was soft and rich, the walls were stained of a warm stone-colour, and the two easy chairs—the only seats which the small size of the room gave space for—were covered with morocco leather of the same hue as the carpet. Over the chimney-piece hung a landscape; one of the blackest and shiniest that Wardour-street could turn out. Mr. Frost called it (and thought it) a *Salvator Rosa*.

The only technical belongings visible in the room, were a few carefully selected law books, on a spare shelf near the window.

"Lovegrove does all the pounce and parchment business," Mr. Frost was wont to say, jocosely. "He likes it."

But no client who had ever sat in the purple morocco easy-chair opposite to Mr. Frost, failed to discover that, however much that gentleman might profess to despise those outward and visible symbols of his profession which he characterised generically as pounce and parchment, yet he was none the less a keen, acute, practical, hard-headed lawyer.

Mr. Frost looked up from his papers as Mrs. Lockwood quietly entered the room.

His face wore a look of care, and almost of premature age; for his portly upright figure, perfectly dark hair, and vigour of movement, betokened a man still in the prime of his strength. But his face was livid and haggard, and his eyebrows were surmounted by a complex series of wrinkles, which drew together in a knot, that gave him the expression of one continually and painfully at work in the solution of some weighty problem.

He rose and shook hands with Mrs. Lockwood, and then waved her to the chair opposite to his own.

"Tell me at once," he said, folding his hands before him on the table and slightly bending forward as he addressed the widow, "if your business is really pressing. I scarcely think there is another person in London whom I would have admitted at this moment."

"My business *is* pressing. And I am much obliged to you," replied Mrs. Lockwood, looking at him steadily.

"You think, with your usual incredulity, that I had no real occupation when your visit interrupted me. Sometimes, I grant you, I shut myself in here for a little—*Hah!* I was going to say *peace!*—for a

little quiet, for leisure to think for myself, instead of hiring out my thinking faculties to other people. But to-day it was not so. Look here!"

He pointed to the mass of papers under his hand (on the announcement of Mrs. Lockwood's approach he had thrown a large sheet of blotting-paper over them), and fluttered them rapidly with his fingers. "I have been going through these, and was only half-way when you came."

"Bills?" said Mrs. Lockwood.

"Some bills, and some—Yes; chiefly bills. But they all need looking at."

As he spoke he thrust them aside with a careless gesture, which half hid them once more under the blotting-paper.

Mrs. Lockwood's observant eyes had perceived that one of them bore the heading of a fashionable milliner's establishment.

"I am sorry," she said, "to interrupt the calculation of your wife's bonnet bills; but I really must intrude my prosaic business on your notice."

"What a bitter little weed you are, Zillah!" rejoined Mr. Frost, leaning back in his chair and regarding her thoughtfully.

"You have no right to say so."

"The best right; for I know you. I don't complain—"

"Oh! you don't complain!" she echoed, with a short soft laugh.

"No," he proceeded; "I do not complain that your tongue is steeped in wormwood sometimes; for I know that you have not found life full of honey. Neither have I, Zillah. If you knew my anxieties, my sleepless nights, my—But you would not believe me, even if I had time and inclination to talk about myself. What is it that you want with me this morning?"

"I want my money."

"Have you come here to say that?"

"That's the gist of what I have come to say. I put it crudely, because shortly. But you and I know very well that that is always the burden of the tale."

"Do you expect me to take out a pocket-book full of bank-notes, and hand them to you across the table, like a man in a play? But," he added, after a momentary struggle with his own temper, "it is worse than useless for us to jangle. You are too sensible a woman to have come here merely for the pleasure of dunning me. Tell me what has induced you to take this step?"

"I desired to speak with you. To the first note I sent you, asking you to call in Gower-street, I got no answer—"

"I was engaged day and night at the

time. I meant to come to you as soon as I had an hour's leisure."

"To the second note you replied that you were going out of town for three days."

"It was quite true. I only got back last night."

"And therefore I came here this morning."

"Has anything new happened?"

"Something new is always happening. Hugh is bent on setting up for himself. His father's friends in the country have urged him to do so."

"It would be folly on his part to leave Digby and West for the next year or so. I give this opinion just as I should if I were asked for advice by a perfect stranger. You doubtless think that I am actuated by some underhand motive."

"No; I do not think so. And, moreover, I should agree with you in your opinion, if I did not know that Hugh is entitled to a sum of money which would suffice to make the experiment he contemplates a judicious instead of a rash one."

"I do not see that."

"Hugh, at all events, has the right to judge for himself."

"And you have the right to influence his judgment."

"Sometimes I am tempted—nay, often, very often, I am tempted—to tell Hugh everything, and let him fight his own fight. I am so tired of it!"

"Tell him then!" ejaculated Mr. Frost, impatiently. "I, too, am weary, God knows!"

"You have the power to put an end to your weariness and to my importunities. Do me justice. After all, I am but claiming what is my own."

"It is your own. I know it. I have never sought to deny it. You cannot say that I have."

He rose with a quick, irritable movement from his chair, and stood leaning against the mantel-piece, with his back to the empty grate.

"Then why not restore it at once, and end this weary business?"

"Surely you must understand that such a sum is not to be had at a moment's notice!"

"A moment's notice! How many years is it since you promised me that it should be restored as soon as Hugh came of age?"

"I know, I know. But, during this last year or two there have been embarrassments, and—and—difficulties."

Mrs. Lockwood leaned her head on her hand, and looked up at him. "Do you

know," she said, slowly, "what I begin to be afraid of? That you have been telling me the truth lately, and that you really are in pecuniary difficulties!"

The blood rushed darkly over the lawyer's face, but he met her look with a smile and an ironical raising of the eyebrows.

"Upon my word," he said, "you are civil—and ingenious! You begin to be 'afraid that I have been telling you the truth!' I presume you have hitherto supposed that I kept your cash in hard, round, yellow sovereigns, locked up in a box, and that I had nothing to do but to take them out whenever I chose, and hand them over to you! I am sorry that I cannot altogether dissipate your apprehensions. I have been telling you the truth, but, nevertheless, your money is safe!"

The air of superiority in the man, his voice and bearing, were not without their effect on Mrs. Lockwood. She faltered a moment. Then she said, "You can at least name some time for a settlement, can you not? Give me some fixed date to look forward to. I have been very patient."

"Look here, Zillah, I have a very advantageous thing in view. It will be highly lucrative, if it comes off as I anticipate. It has been proposed to me to go abroad in the character of legal adviser to a very wealthy and powerful English company, and——"

"To go abroad!"

"Temporarily. For a few months merely. It is a question of obtaining a concession for some important works from the Italian government. If the affair succeeds, I shall be in a position not only to pay you back your own—that," he added, watching her face, "is a matter of course in any case—but to advance Hugh's prospects very materially. Will you have a little more patience, and a little more faith, and wait until the winter?"

"Six months?" said Mrs. Lockwood, wearily.

"Yes; six months. Say six months! And meanwhile—as for Hugh, since he knows nothing, he will be suffering no suspense."

"Hugh? No, thank God! If it had been a question of subjecting my son instead of myself to the grinding of hope deferred, the matter should have been settled in one way or the other years ago!"

Mr. Frost looked at the small, frail figure before him; at the pale, delicate-featured face, framed in its soft grey curls; and he

wondered at the strength of resolution to endure that was expressed in every curve of her mouth, in the firmness of her attitude, as she stood with her little nervous hands clasped in front of her, in the steadiness of the dark eyes whose setting was so worn and tear-stained.

"Good-by, Zillah," he said, taking her hand; "I will come to Gower-street, soon."

"Yes; you had better come. Hugh misses you. He wants to talk to you about his plans, he says."

"I shall give him the advice I told you—to stay with Digby and West for at least another year, on the terms they offer. Bless my life, it is no such hardship! What hurry is there for him to undertake the responsibilities and cares of a professional man who has, or thinks he has," added Mr. Frost, hastily correcting himself, "nothing in the world to depend upon but his own exertions?"

Mrs. Lockwood made as though she were about to speak, and then checked herself with a little, quick sigh.

"Zillah!" said Mr. Frost, taking again the hand he had relinquished, and bending down to look into her face, "there is something new! You have not told me all that is in your mind."

"Because what is in my mind on this subject is all vague and uncertain. But I fancy—I think—that Hugh has fallen in love."

"Ah, you are like the rest of the women, and put your real meaning into the postscript. I *knew* there was something you had to say."

"I did not mean to say it at all. It is only a surmise——"

"I have considerable faith in the accuracy of your surmises. And it furnishes a likely enough motive for Hugh's hot haste to make himself a place in the world. Can you guess at the woman?"

"I know her. She is a girl of barely eighteen. She lives in my house."

"What! that Lady—Lady——"

"Lady Tallis Gale's niece, Miss Desmond."

"Stay! Where did I hear of her? Oh, I have it! Lovegrove is trustee under her mother's will. She has a mere pittance secured to her out of the wreck of her father's fortune. Besides, those kind of people, though they may be almost beggars, would, ten to one, look down on your son from the height of their family grandeur. This girl's father was one of the Power-Desmonds, a beggarly, scatter-

brained, spendthrift, Irish—gentleman! I dare say the young lady has been taught to be proud of her (probably hypothetical) descent from a savage inferior to a Zulu Kaffir."

"Very likely. But your eloquence is wasted on me. You should talk to Hugh. I'm afraid he has set his heart on this."

"Set his heart! Hugh is—how old? Three-and-twenty?"

"Hugh will be twenty-five in August."

"Ah! Think of a woman of your experience talking of a young fellow of that age having 'set his heart' on anything! No doubt he has 'set his heart.' And how many times will it be set and unset again before he is thirty?"

"God forbid that Hugh should be such a man as some whom my experience has taught me to know!"

"Humph! Just now this love on which Hugh has 'set his heart,' was a mere surmise on your part. Now you declare it to be a serious and established fact, and 'God forbid' it should not be!"

"When will you come?" asked Mrs. Lockwood, disregarding the sneer.

"I will come to-morrow evening, if I *can*. You know that my time is not mine to dispose of."

"True. But it is sometimes easier to dispose of that which belongs to other people than of one's own rightful property, is it not?"

With this Parthian dart, Mrs. Lockwood disappeared, gliding noiselessly out of the small room, through the next chamber, and acknowledging by a modest, quiet, little bend of the head the respectful alacrity of the clerk who had first admitted her, in rising to open the door for her exit.

AS THE CROW FLIES.

DUE SOUTH. WINCHESTER TO LYMINGTON.

THE crow looks down on the White City optically, not intellectually. He sees many houses in a cluster, the shape of a woolpack, nipped in the centre by the girdle of the High-street. The old city of the Roman weavers and huntmen, and of the West Saxon kings, lies healthily and pleasantly in a snug valley between two sheltering steep chalk hills, the river Itchen running on its border. This is the city where Edward the Third established the wool staple, where Richard the First was recrowned on his return from his Austrian prison, the city which Simon de Montford sacked, the city where Richard the Second held a parliament—the city twice besieged and taken during the Civil Wars.

The houses of Winchester are ranged round

the cathedral, like so many pawns round a king at chess. This building is a small history of England in itself. It dates back to some early British king, and was subsequently turned into a Pagan temple. St. Swithun, Bishop of Winchester (852-863), was the patron saint whose relics were here honoured for many centuries. The worthy man had originally snuggled lying in the churchyard, but his successor, Bishop Athelwold, removed the honoured bones from a chapel outside the north door of the nave, and placed them in a glistening golden shrine behind the cathedral altar. The removal of the relics was at first frustrated by forty days' miraculous rain, and it hence became a popular belief, first in Hampshire, then all over England, that if there were rain on St. Swithun's Day (July 15), it would rain for forty days after, according to the old rhyme:

St. Swithun's day if thou doth rain,
For forty days it will remain;
St. Swithun's day if thou be fair,
For forty days 'twill rain na mair.

But the crow must for a moment be biographical. In a recent number he gave a sketch of the career of an old soldier in the reign of Henry the Fifth; he will now give an outline of the life of a prelate in the reign of Edward the Third. The old cathedral was rebuilt by Bishop Wakelin, 1079, with Isle of Wight limestone and Hempage oak. Bishop De Lucy carried the work further, and Bishop Edington began the nave that William of Wykeham continued; and that great statesman lies in effigy still in his beautiful chantry, arrayed in cope and mitre, his pillow supported by angels, and three stone monks praying at his feet.

William of Wykeham, born in 1344, and the son of poor parents, was educated by Nicolas Uvedale, governor of Winchester. While still young he became architect to Edward the Third, and rebuilt part of Windsor Castle. He then took holy orders, and was made curate of Pulham, in Norfolk. Step by step Wykeham rose to the highest dignities: being first, secretary to the king, lastly, Chancellor of England and Bishop of Winchester. Compelled to resign office by a cabal to prevent all priests holding civil employments, the bishop applied himself to building and endowing New College, Oxford, and a college at Winchester, originally the enlargement of a small grammar school, to which the founder himself had been sent as a child by his kind patron, Sir Nicolas Uvedale. When Edward the Third retired to Eltham to mourn over the loss of the Black Prince, the Duke of Lancaster (John of Gaunt), the real sovereign for the time, persecuted Wykeham, drove him from parliament, and seized all his temporalities. Richard the Second, however, rehabilitated him. The minister resigned when he found the young king recklessly rushing to ruin, henceforward devoted himself to good works, and died in 1404. Winchester owes much to this great prelate, for he procured the charter for the city as a wool staple, and he restored that admirable charity, the Hospital of St. Cross, just

outside the town, originally founded by Bishop de Blois, in 1136, for thirteen poor men. Shakespeare's Cardinal Beaufort increased it and added the distinct establishment of "The Almshouse of Noble Poverty," for thirty-five brethren and three attendant nuns. This great cardinal lies in the cathedral in a chantry of his own, opposite Bishop Waynflete. It was mutilated by the Puritan soldiers when they stabled their horses in Winchester choir. In spite of the Bard and Sir Joshua, Beaufort never murdered his rival Gloucester, nor did he die in a torture of remorse, but, on the contrary, as an eye-witness tells us, he made a goodly ending of it. "Unscrupulous in the choice of his instruments" the cardinal may have been, but he was undoubtedly a great statesman, firm, far-seeing, and fertile in resources.

A plain marble slab in Prior Silktede's Chapel marks the tomb of an illustrious angler, honest Fleet-street tradesman, and excellent writer, Isaac Walton, who died in 1683, at the house of his son-in-law, Dr. Hawkins, a prebendary of Winchester. His epitaph, probably written by Bishop Ken (the author of the Evening Hymn), his brother-in-law, is well worthy the excellent man it records:

Alas! he's gone before—
Gone to return no more.
Our panting breasts aspire
After their aged sire,
Whose well-spent life did last
Full ninety years and past;
But now he hath begun
That which will ne'er be done;
Crown'd with eternal bliss,
We wish our souls with his.

Every stone of this old cathedral, has its legend. At the altar Edward the Confessor was crowned, and in the nave his mother, Emma, falsely accused of incontinence, passed safely, blindfold, over the ordeal of nine red-hot ploughshares. In this building lies a son of King Alfred; here, at the high altar, Canute, after his rebuke on the Southampton shore to his courtiers, hung up his golden crown, and here he was afterwards interred.

Rufus, the successor of the Conqueror, delighted in Winchester because it was so near the Hampshire forests. Indeed the rapacious rascal had reason to like it, since on the death of his father he had scooped out of the Winchester treasury sixty thousand pounds of silver besides gold and precious stones. Rufus died detested by his subjects, and the monks he had plundered, but he left two things to be remembered—the White Tower that he completed, and the Great Hall at Westminster, that he put together. The plain tomb of the tyrant, whom no one lamented, is still existing—a stumbling-block nearly in the centre of the choir at Winchester Cathedral.

Winchester has twice been glorified by the splendour of royal marriages—a happy and an unhappy alliance. The first was in February, 1403, when Henry the Fourth married Joanna of Navarre. This sensible and amiable woman was the daughter of Charles the Bad and the widow of John the valiant Duke of Bretagne;

Henry was a widower, his first wife having been Mary de Bohun, with whom early in life he had eloped from the old castle the crow has already visited at Pleshy. Joanna started from Camaret, a small port near Brest, and arrived at Falmouth storm-driven, attended by her two infant daughters, Blanche and Marguerite, their nurses, and a gay crowd of Breton and Navarrese attendants. The fair widow of France was a beautiful woman, with small regular features and a broad forehead. Her handsome husband-elect received her at Winchester, attended by many lords and knights. The marriage took place with great pomp in the ancient royal city at the church of St. Swithin. The bridal feast was thought very costly, and was remarkable for two courses of fish and the introduction of crowned eagles and crowned panthers in confectionery during intervals of the meal.

After her husband's death Joanna got on but badly, for her step-son, Henry the Fifth, plundered her of half her dowry, and accused her of witchcraft. She had also to mourn when the nation that had adopted her was rejoicing, for her son Arthur, attacking our outposts at Agincourt with a whirlwind of French cavalry, was desperately wounded, struck down, and taken prisoner. Her son-in-law the Duke d'Alençon, who had cloven Henry's jewelled helmet, was also slain in the same battle, and her brother, the Constable of France, died of his wounds the following day. Joanna ended her troubled life at Havering-atte-Bower, in 1437, and her ghost is supposed still to haunt the ruins of the palace there. Joanna's arms, an ermine collared and chained, were formerly conspicuous in the windows of Christchurch, near Newgate.

The next royal wedding at Winchester was the ill-omened and fruitless union of Mary and Philip. The gloomy Spanish king, with the projecting jaw and the hard cruel eyes, landed at Southampton, with the Duke of Alba and other memorable Spanish nobles. He was dressed in plain black velvet, a black cap hung with gold chains, and a red felt cloak. Gardiner, the notorious Bishop of Winchester, escorted him to that venerable city with a train of one hundred and fifty gentlemen, dressed in black velvet and black cloth, and with rich gold chains round their necks. The cavalcade rode slowly over the heavy roads to Winchester, in a cruel and pitiless rain. On the next day, the 25th of July, St. James's day, took place the nuptials. The gloomy bridegroom wore white satin trunk-hose and a robe of rich brocade, bordered with pearls and diamonds. The ill-favoured bride was attired in a white satin gown and coif, scarlet shoes, and a black velvet scarf. The chair on which she sat, a present from the Pope, who had insufficiently blessed it, is still shown at the cathedral. Gardiner and Bonner were both present, rejoicing at the match, and four other bishops, stately with their crosiers. Sixty Spanish grandees attended Philip. The hall of the episcopal palace where the bridal

banquet took place was hung with silk and gold striped arras, the plate was solid gold. The Winchester boys recited Latin epithalamiums, and were rewarded by the queen. A year after that time, Philip left Mary and England for ever.

One of the interesting historical events that have dignified Winchester, was the defiance hurled at Henry the Fifth, just about to embark at Southampton for his invasion of Normandy, by the gallant French ambassador, the Archbishop of Bruges. On Henry saying, through the Archbishop of Canterbury, that he would not rest satisfied with anything short of all the territories formerly possessed by England, the French prelate replied that Henry would certainly be driven back to the sea, and lose either his liberty or his life. He then exclaimed, "I have done with England, and I demand my passport." Our chivalrous young king had never forgiven the Frenchmen's insolent present of a cask of tennis balls, in scorn of the wild excesses which had disgraced his youth.

"When I use them," he said, bitterly, "I will strike them back with such a racket as shall force open Paris gates!"

After his house at Newmarket was burnt down, Charles the Second squandered nearly twenty thousand pounds, according to Evelyn, in building a palace on the site of the old castle. It was to have cost thirty-five thousand pounds, and to have been a hunting seat. The first stone was laid by the swarthy king in person, March 23, 1683. James stopped the building, but Queen Anne came to see, and wished to have completed it for her dully respectable husband, Prince George of Denmark. In the French war of 1756, five thousand prisoners cooked their soup and cursed the English within its walls; in 1792 some poor famished French curés occupied it; and in 1796 it became what it has since been; a common barrack. Wren's design included a large cupola, sixty feet above the roof, that was to have been a sea mark, and a handsome street leading in a direct line from the cathedral to the palace.

It was at Winchester, in August, 1685, that the detestable Judge Jeffreys began the butchery that King James so much desired, with the trial of dame Alicia Lisle, a venerable and respected woman of more than seventy, the widow of one of Cromwell's lords (one of King Charles's judges, some say) who had been assassinated at Lausanne by the Royalists. She was accused of harbouring John Hickes, a Nonconformist divine, and Richard Nelthorpe, a fugitive lawyer, who had dabbled in the Rye House Plot. The chief witness, a man named Dunne, living at Warminster, deposed that some days after the battle of Sedgemoor (which was in July), a short, swarthy, dark-haired man sent him to Lady Lisle at Moyles Court, near Fordingbridge, to know if she could give Hickes shelter. Lady Lisle desired them to come on the following Tuesday, and on the evening of that day he escorted two horsemen, "a full, fat, black man, and a thin

black man." A Wiltshire man, whom they paid to show them the way over the plain, betrayed them to Colonel Penruddock, who early the next morning discovered Hickes hidden in the malthouse, and Nelthorpe in a hole in a chimney. Lady Lisle's defence was that she knew Hickes to be a Nonconformist minister against whom a warrant was issued, but she did not know he had been with the Duke of Monmouth. As for Nelthorpe, she did not even know his name; she had denied him to the soldiers, only from fear, as they were rude and insolent, and were with difficulty restrained from plundering the house. Lady Lisle then avowed that she abhorred the Monmouth plot, and that the day on which King Charles was beheaded she had not gone out of her chamber, and had shed more tears for him than any woman then living, as the late Countess of Monmouth, my Lady Marlborough, my Lord Chancellor Hyde, and twenty persons of the most eminent quality could bear witness. Moreover, she said, her son had been sent by her to bear arms on the king's side, and it was she who had bred him up to fight for the king. Jeffreys, eager to spill blood at the first case of treason on the circuit, and seeing the jury waver, roared and bellowed blasphemy at Dunne, who became too frightened to speak.

"I hope," cried this model judge, "I hope, gentlemen of the jury, you take notice of the strange and horrible carriage of this fellow, and withal you cannot but observe the spirit of this sort of people, what a villanous and devilish one it is. A Turk is a saint to such a fellow as this; many a Pagan would be ashamed to have no more truth in him. Blessed Jesus, what a generation of vipers! Dost thou believe that there is a God? Dost thou believe thou hast a precious and immortal soul? Dost—"

"I cannot tell what to say, my lord," stammered poor tormented Dunne.

Jeffreys: "Good God, was there ever such an impudent rascal! Hold the candle up that we may see his brazen face."

Dunne: "My lord, I am so baulked I do not know what I say. Tell me what you would have me say, for I am shattered out of my senses."

Placid Judge: "Why, prithee, man, there is nobody baulks thee but thy own self. Thou art asked questions as plain as anything in the world can be; it is only thy own haughty depraved heart that baulks both thy honesty and understanding, if thou hast any; it is thy studying how to prevaricate that puzzles and confounds thy intellect; but I see all the pains in the world, and all compassion and charity is lost upon thee, and therefore will say no more to thee."

The jury were long in discussion, and three times brought in Alicia Lisle not guilty, but they succumbed at last to the judge's threats and denunciations. The poor charitable woman was condemned to be burnt to death on the next day. The clergy of Winchester Cathedral remonstrated against the cruel haste, and Jeffreys,

not wishing to destroy the sociability of his visit, postponed the execution for five days. In the mean time there was great intercession made. The only mercy James had the heart to show was to commute the sentence from burning to beheading. On the afternoon of September the 2nd she suffered death on a scaffold in the market-place, and underwent her fate with serene courage and Christian resolution. Her last words were forgiveness to all who had done her wrong. In the first year of William and Mary the attainder was reversed, and Lady Lisle's two daughters, Triphena and Bridget, were restored to all their former rights.

Winchester Castle was destroyed by Cromwell. The hall (formerly called the chapel) now only remains. The famous Round Table, framed by Merlin, still hangs on the east end. Henry the Eighth and Charles the Fifth came to see this relic, whose date is uncertain. There are bullet marks on it, said to be the work of Cromwell's relic-despising musketeers.

The crow skims to Southampton, and alights on the Bar-gate, just above the sullen figures of Sir Bevis and Ascapart. This Ascapart was a loathly giant whom Sir Bevis subdued with sword and spear, and coerced into more or less patient bondage. Only half tamed, however, this Caliban mutinied on one occasion in the absence of his master, and carried off Josyan the Bright, wife of Sir Bevis, whose knights soon tracked out and slew the foul felon. Sir Bevis lived on the mount three quarters of a mile above the Bar. This noble paladin, after much fighting, died on the same day with his loving wife, Josyan, and his horse Arundel. The Venice galleys that in the middle ages brought to the Hampshire coast Indian spices, Damascus carpets, Murano glass, and Levant wine, no doubt took back with them English cloth and English legends. Mr. Rawdon Brown tells us that to this day the "History of Sir Bevis of Hampton," is a stock piece at the Venetian puppet-show theatres.

The crow must not forget that it was on the shore near Southampton (not at Bosham as Sussex antiquaries insist on having it) that Canute, to rebuke his Danish courtiers, who beheld in him a monarch feared by the English, Scotch, Welsh, Danish, Swedes, and Norwegians, commanded the tide to recede, and respect its sovereign. Indeed a daring Southampton man has satisfactorily settled the site of the story by erecting a public-house near the Docks called "The Canute Castle."

Our bird rejoices in Southampton, not because it was once a dépôt for Cornish tin; because Charles the Fifth embarked from here; because Richard the First here assembled his fleet for the crusades, and took on board eight hundred protesting Hampshire hogs, and ten thousand horse-shoes; or because our army for Crecy embarked here, but because it is eminently a Shakesperean place, like many others he has visited. Here, as the dépôt for Cordovan leather, Alexandrian sugar, and for Bordeaux and Rochelle wine, the favourite place of embarkation indeed for Nor-

mandy and Guienne, the chivalrous king gathered together in 1450 his one thousand five hundred sail, his six thousand men-at-arms, his twenty-four thousand archers, and Nym, Bardolph, and Pistol. Shakespeare has given a splendid panorama of the scene :

Suppose that you have seen
The well-appointed king at Hampton pier
Embark his royalty ; and his brave fleet
With silken streamers the young Phœbus fanning.

O, do but think,
You stand upon the rivage, and behold
A city on the inconstant billows dancing ;
For so appears this fleet majestic,
Holding due course to Harfleur.

It was just at starting that the discovery took place of the conspiracy which Shakespeare has also dramatised. The king's cousin Richard, Earl of Cambridge, had conspired with Henry's favourite councillors and companions, Sir Thomas Grey and Lord Scrope of Masham, to ride to the frontiers of Wales, and there proclaim the Earl of March the rightful heir to the crown of Richard the Second, if that monarch were really dead, which some still doubted. The three conspirators were all executed, and their bones lie in the chapel of the Domus Dei, an ancient hospital in Winkle-street.

Bevis Mount, just outside Southampton, was the residence of Lord Peterborough, the general who drove the French out of Spain in the War of the Succession, and the steady friend, first of Dryden, then of Pope, Swift, and all their set. He spent the latter part of his stirring life at his "wild romantic cottage" with his second wife, Anastasia Robinson, a celebrated singer, whom for a long time his pride forbade him to publicly acknowledge. Pope often visited him here, particularly in the autumn of 1735, just before the earl started for Lisbon, in which voyage he died. Pope pays the veteran several compliments, talks of his gardening, and his taming

The genius of the stubborn plain
Almost as quickly as he conquer'd Spain.

The poet also describes the Spanish flags and trophy guns which the eccentric old general had arranged over his garden-gate.

Peterborough travelled so furiously fast, that the wits said of him that he had talked to more kings and more postilions than any man in Europe ; and Queen Anne's ministers used to say that they always wrote *at* him, not to him. Swift has sketched him with kindly sarcasm :

Mordaunt gallops on alone ;
The roads are with his followers strewn ;
This breaks a girth, and that a bone.

His body, active as his mind,
Returning sound in limb and wind,
Except some leather lost behind.

A skeleton in outward figure,
His meagre corpse, though full of vigour,
Would halt behind him, were it bigger.

So wonderful his expedition,
When you have not the least suspicion,
He's with you like an apparition.

That excellent little man, Dr. Isaac Watts, is

also one of the prides of Southampton, having been born at a small red-brick house (21, French-street), in 1674. His father, a humble schoolmaster, had suffered much for his nonconformity ; and once, when her husband was in prison, the wife was seen sitting on a stone outside the door, suckling little Isaac.

From Southampton to the New Forest's sixty-four thousand acres, is a mere flap of the wing to the crow at his best speed. The beech glades, alive with countless squirrels, the ridings echoing with the swift hoofs of half-wild ponies, the great arcades of oak-trees lie before him. It was long supposed that this wild district was first turned into hunting ground by William the Conqueror. According to one old chronicler the savage Norman, "who loved the tall deer as if he were their father," and made it a hanging matter to kill a stag, destroyed fifty-two mother churches and effaced countless villages, in a space thirty miles long : but this is untrue. It is true that thirty manors around Lyndhurst, in the green heart of the forest, ceased to be cultivated ; but the Gurthas and Wambas, the serfs, and thralls, and villains were not driven away. The only two churches mentioned in Domesday Book—Milford and Brockenhurst—still exist ; and, indeed, immediately after the afforestation, a church was built at Boldre, and another at Hordle. The real grievance, therefore, with the Hampshire Saxons, thirteen years after the Conquest, was the placing a larger district than before under the cruel Norman forest law. The deaths in the forest by chance arrow wounds of Rufus, the Conqueror's youngest son Richard, and also of an illegitimate son of Duke Robert, were looked upon by the Saxon peasants as the result of divine vengeance. There are no red deer now in the forest, as when Mr. Howitt wrote his delightful sketches of the scenery, and saw, "awaking as from a dream, one deep shadow, one thick and continuous roof of boughs, and thousands of hoary boles, standing clothed, as it were, with the very spirit of silence." The stirrup of Rufus still hangs in the Queen's House at Lyndhurst. The moat of Malwood Keep, where Rufus slept the night before his death, can still be traced near Stony Cross, on the Minstead road. The cottage of Purkiss, the charcoal-burner who found his body, is still shown to those who care to believe in it. Through Boldre wood, Rufus and the hunters rode on the day when Tyrrell's arrow flew awry. Away above Sopley, on the main road from Christchurch to Ringwood, is Tyrrellsford, where the frightened French knight forded the Avon on his way to Poole, to embark for Normandy ; and close by the ford stands the forge of the blacksmith who shod Tyrrell's horse. The fugitive is said to have slain this blacksmith to prevent his prating of such a horseman's having passed that way.

At Lymington—close to which is Baddesley, where, in the last century, a groaning elm for a year and a half caused much superstitious excitement—the crow, refreshed by a blue

glimpse of the Isle of Wight, turns smart for London and his old perch on St. Paul's, to rest a moment before he strikes due north.

FASTING GIRLS.

THE public journals have lately told a strange story of the fasting girl of Wales; but it seems to be little known how frequent the instances of a similar kind have been, in past years.

Of course the fasting which is connected with religious ordinances is a different matter altogether. Voluntary abstinence being a kind of self-mortification, its inclusion amongst moral or religious duties is easily accounted for. The climate of the country and the habits of the people modify the custom in different regions; but if this were the proper place for such a topic, it might be conclusively shown that voluntary fasting, as a religious duty, has at one time or other held sway throughout almost every part of the world. Total abstinence for a certain length of time; a limitation to certain kinds of food; a limitation to one meal a day, with any choice of food; one meal a day, and of one kind of food only; these are among the various forms which the custom has presented.

Exceptional instances, however, unconnected with religion, and mostly arising (there is good reason to believe) out of a fraudulent intention to deceive, require to be well looked into by physicians. In rare examples it is a fasting man who appeals to our love of the marvellous. In 1531, one John Scott acquired much notoriety in this way. Being in a self-reproving spirit for some crime which he had committed, he took sanctuary in Holyrood Abbey, and abstained from food for thirty or forty days. This fact coming to the knowledge of the king (James the Fifth), Scott was shut up in a room in Edinburgh Castle with a little bread and water, which were found untouched at the end of thirty-two days. Afterwards the man visited many parts of Europe, proclaiming his power of abstaining from food for very long periods of time together; but there is no clear evidence whether his alleged achievements were ever investigated by persons competent to ferret out the truth. In 1760, a gentleman in London was reported to have lived ever since 1735 without meat, and with only water to drink; but this may not be inconsistent with what is now known by the name of vegetarianism. About the same time a French boy at Chateauroux was foodless (so far as was known) for a whole year; but his appetite returned when a particular malady left him, not however until he had become terribly emaciated. The journals of 1771 told of a Stamford man who, for the sake of a wager of ten pounds, kept himself for fifty-one days without any kind of solid food or milk; but here it would have been well to state what limitation of meaning was given to the word "solid." Dr. Willan records a case (dated 1786), of a young man who, under the

combined influence of bodily malady and morbid mental depression, resolved to retire from his friends and also to abstain from food. During fifty-one days he took no exercise, slept very little, wrote a great deal, ate no food, but moistened his mouth from time to time with a little water flavoured with orange juice, the quantity of drink thus taken being about half a pint a day. Ten days more passed in the same way, by the end of which time his bodily emaciation had become terrible to witness. His friends then found out the place of his retreat, and brought a physician to visit him; but ill-judged treatment failed to restore him—the hapless young man sank into the grave on the eleventh day, or the seventy-second day after the commencement of his voluntary fasting. Dr. Currie, of Liverpool, placed upon record a case, in which an elderly gentleman was literally starved to death through inability to swallow, on account of the formation of an irremovable tumour at the very bottom of the passage to the stomach. For twelve months he had a difficulty in swallowing food; then solid food refused completely to pass; then for thirteen days he could only take a few spoonfuls of liquid in the course of a day; and then, when all passage to the stomach was effectually and finally closed, he was kept alive for thirty-six days longer by baths of warm milk-and-water, combined with special medical treatment in other ways. The unfortunate gentleman, who had been both tall and stout, lessened in weight from two hundred and forty pounds to one hundred and thirty-eight pounds during this process of slow starvation; at the time of his death his mental powers were much less affected than his friends and his physician expected they would be.

As we have said, fasting women and girls have made more noise in the world than fasting men, and there has been more suspicion of trickery in the cases recorded. Considering the stories which the chroniclers of old days were wont to record, we need not wonder much at some of the narratives of fasting told by them. But, before noticing them, a word or two may be said concerning certain colliery accidents which have entailed great privation of food. Several years ago, at the Edmonston colliery, in Scotland, some of the brickwork of the shaft fell in, and closed up the mouth of the working level; thirteen persons were boxed up in darkness below for more than two days without food, and were then liberated by the exertions of the persons above ground. In 1813, at Wolverhampton, the sides of a coal mine fell in through a similar cause, and enclosed eight men and a boy in one of the workings, without light, without food, and with no other water than the drippings from the roof, which they caught in an iron pot. It was six days and a half before these pitmen were rescued—exhausted, but easily restored by careful treatment. Then there was the remarkable case at Brierly Hill, last March, when a coal-pit was flooded by a sudden inrush

of water, compelling thirteen men and boys to take refuge in such of the workings as still remained dry. From Tuesday, the sixteenth, to Monday, the twenty-second, they had no food; and yet all save one were brought up alive, and fully recovered.

But now for a few female examples. Cecilia de Rygeaway, having been imprisoned in Nottingham jail for the murder of her husband, during the reign of Edward the Third (the year 1357), remained "mute and abstinent" for forty days, neither eating nor drinking during this time. It was considered so much in the nature of a religious sign or miracle that Dame Rygeaway was pardoned by the king.

Coming down to later times, we find the case recorded by Plot, in his History of Staffordshire, of one Mary Waughton, who, during the whole of her life, was accustomed to live upon an incredibly small quantity of food and drink. A piece of bread-and-butter about the size of half-a-crown, or a piece of meat not larger than a pigeon's egg, was her daily ration; while for beverage she took only a spoonful or two of milk-and-water. We are told that she was a fresh-complexioned and healthy maiden; and Dr. Plot complacently demands credence for the story on the ground that she was "of the Church of England, and therefore the less likely to put a trick upon the world."

The eighteenth century produced many instances with which journalists were busy. One was the case of Christina Michelot, a young French girl, who, in 1751, took to a sudden fit of fasting after a serious attack of fever. It is not very clear whether she was actually unable or only unwilling to eat; but, according to the narrative, she took nothing but water from November, 1751, to July, 1755, a period of more than three years and a half, without any solid food whatever. During this time she advanced from her eleventh to her fifteenth year, after which she resumed the usual habits of eating and drinking. This case attracted much attention among French physicians at the time; as did likewise that of Maria Matcheteria among German physicians in 1774. This was a woman approaching middle age, who, after an attack of fever and nervous malady, became an involuntary faster. For two years, we are told, she took nothing but curds-and-whey and water, and for another year nothing whatever of food or drink. The fact was commented upon, however, that she swallowed a bit of the consecrated wafer once a week at the Eucharist; and from this it was inferred that she *could* swallow if she chose. How far disinclination, or dissimulation, or both, were mixed up in the case, it is impossible now to prove; but it may be very easily and sensibly guessed at.

Our own country, in the same century, presented many instances more or less resembling those of the French girl and the Swabian woman. Of these, two will suffice as illustrations. In 1762, Ann Walsh, a girl of twelve years old living at Harrogate, suddenly lost her appetite,

through causes not at all apparent. She left off solid food entirely, living upon one-third of a pint of wine-and-water daily; this continued for eighteen months, after which she recovered her normal state of appetite. Ten years later, in 1772, was presented that case which Pennant records in his 'Tour in Scotland. Katherine M'Leod of Ross-shire, at the age of thirty-five, was attacked with a fever which brought on almost total blindness, and also an inability to swallow food. It is averred that, for a year and three quarters, there was no evidence that food or drink passed down her throat, although a little was frequently put into her mouth. Pennant saw her in a miserable state of emaciation; but we have no record of her subsequent career.

Perhaps the most noted instance of all was that of the "Fasting Woman of Tutbury," not only for its marvels, but for its audacious fraud. During the early years of the present century she was the talk of the county, and of many other parts of England. In November, 1808, a surgeon resolved to visit her, and to ascertain as much of the truth as possible. She told him that her name was Ann Moore, that she was fifty-eight years of age, and that she had gone twenty months without food. According to her account, she had had a severe attack of illness in the year 1804, which lasted thirteen weeks. Her recovery was not complete, for she was troubled during many months afterwards with violent fits and spasms at frequent and regular intervals. Another inflammatory attack came on in 1805, and lasted eleven weeks. When she recovered from this, her fits and spasms were gone, but were followed by loss of appetite and difficulty of digestion. Her attendance in 1806, on a sick boy afflicted with a repulsive disease, decreased her power of assimilating food. From October in that year to February, 1807, she ate only a penny loaf in a fortnight, and drank a little tea without milk or sugar. From that time she lived (according to her own story) till November, 1808, without any solid food, taking only water and tea. The surgeon (who, by the way, was only V.S., not M.R.C.S.) could not detect any flaw in her story. When it was published in the Monthly Magazine, early in 1809, it made a prodigious sensation; and on this sensation the woman lived four years. At last, in 1813, a few scientific men in the neighbourhood determined to sift the matter to the bottom; for Ann Moore still continued to declare to the world that she took no solid food whatever, and only just liquid enough to moisten her tongue and lips. They got her to consent, as the only true test of her sincerity, to let them guard and watch her room, as a means of assuring that no food of any kind should be brought in. The woman was probably rendered very anxious by this ordeal, but could not positively refuse it without causing a suspicion of deception. The watch-and-ward began, and lasted nine days. The wretched creature bore the test thus far, and then gave in—terribly emaciated, and really almost

starved to death. She asked for food, recovered her strength, and signed her name (or made her mark) to the following confession: "I, Ann Moore, of Tutbury, humbly asking pardon of all persons whom I have attempted to deceive and impose upon, and, above all, with the most unfeigned sorrow and contrition imploring the Divine mercy and forgiveness of that God whom I have so greatly offended, do most solemnly declare that I have occasionally taken sustenance during the last six years."

The narrative which has recently attracted public attention has this feature: it is written by a physician who gives the guarantee of his own name to the words he writes, and takes responsibility for any scepticism he may express concerning what was told him, or what he *seemed* to see; for in matters of this kind it is not always safe to conclude that "seeing is believing." He is a district medical officer of one of the London unions. Being on an autumnal visit in the counties of Cardigan and Carmarthen, in the recent month of August, he heard a great deal about a certain fasting girl in the last-named shire, and resolved to investigate the matter by such tests as a physician might be able to apply. That she is a girl of thirteen years old, named Sarah Jacob, is as expressible in English as in Welsh; but when we are told that her father, a small tenant-farmer, lives at the village of Llethernoyaduecha, in the parish of Llanfihangelararth, we feel how great a gift it must be to be able to pronounce Welsh. The positive averment of the girl's parents was that, save a fortnightly moistening of her lips with cold water, she had taken neither food nor drink for twenty-three months; that she had had good health until about two years ago, when an attack of illness brought on vomiting of blood; that she had never since left her bed except to be lifted out; that the incapability of swallowing has remained unaltered throughout; and that the very sight of food is sufficient to bring on one of the fits to which she is subject.

Now, this was the story which was told to the physician by the parents of the girl. She herself spoke very little English—using Welsh in conversing with the parents. The very first thing which attracted his notice was that Sarah was evidently regarded as a *show* girl, an exhibition for curiosity-hunting visitors. "The child was lying in her bed decorated as a bride, having round her head a wreath of flowers, from which was suspended a smart riband, the ends of which were joined by a small bunch of flowers after the present fashion of ladies' bonnet-strings. Before her, at proper reading distance, was an open Welsh book, supported by two other books on her body. Across the fireplace, which was nearly opposite the foot of her bed, was an arrangement of shelves well stocked with English and Welsh books, the gifts of various visitors to the house." All this pretentious display aroused his suspicions, and determined him to note the accessory *facts closely*. His account is too long to be

given here in full; but the chief items may usefully be presented in a condensed form.

1. The girl's face was plump, her cheeks and lips of a rosy colour, her eyes bright and sparkling, and her muscular development very inconsistent with such (alleged) wonderful abstinence from food. 2. There was a restless movement and frequent looking out of the corners of the eyes, known to physicians as a concomitant of simulative disease. 3. The pulse was perfectly natural; the stethoscope told of sound lungs and heart, and of a stomach certainly not empty of liquid. 4. He was prevented, by excuses and expostulations on the part of the parents, from examining the girl's back—a test which would have told something to him as a medical man concerning the presence or absence of gastronomic action. 5. He was led to the conviction that the parents honestly believed what they said, but that they were deceived by the girl herself; for "the construction of the bed and the surrounding old Welsh cupboards and drawers in the room were all favourable to the concealment of food." 6. He was told that when watchers were, with permission, placed in the house, they were debarred from touching the bed—an inhibition which reduced the watching to an absurdity. The sum total was, that the physician arrived at these conclusions: that there was no physical cause to prevent this so-called bed-ridden fasting girl from rising from her bed and using her locomotive powers; that the power was there, but that the will was morbidly perverted; that the whole case was one of simulative hysteria in a young girl having the propensity to deceive very strongly developed; and that this tendency was further aided by a power of prolonged fasting, though not approaching in duration to that which was pretended. He acquits the parents of deceit (on what grounds is not very clear to us), but cannot shut his eyes to the fact that they made their patient a complete show-child, receiving money and presents from hundreds of visitors to the farm. Finally, he remarks, "Being made an object of curiosity, sympathy, and profit, is not only antagonistic to the girl's recovery, but also renders it extremely difficult for a medical man to determine how much of the symptoms is the result of a morbid perversion of will, and how much is the product of intentional deceit."

RIDING FOR HEALTH.

My horse is the direct consequence of my having enough to eat. Blest with a good appetite, and devoted to a sedentary pursuit, I became conscious of a liver directly I began to be successful. Revealing this discovery to my doctor, not without a certain pride, as becomes a man whose stock of information is increased, I was rewarded by the terms of opprobrium—"Torpid!" and

"Sluggish;" and was ordered to follow a course of regimen fitter for some sour anchorite than for a modern man of the world. Forewarned as to what part of my friend's prescription was likely to be, I had taken the bull by the horns, and said stoutly that I did not take much exercise, and that circumstances made it impossible for me to have more. Thereupon it was insisted I should become Cornaro and Mr. Banting figuratively rolled into one. My food was to be served with rigid plainness, my times of eating were fixed at impossible hours; my solids were to be taken by the ounce, and my liquids in the way I like them least. With all this, I was to devote an amount of time to my digestion and its needs, utterly incompatible with the business of life. Dining at two, p.m., I was to eat slowly and rest quietly after dinner; to chat during that meal, on light and agreeable topics only; and to shun all mention or thought of work, as poison. My evening repast was to be tea taken at seven o'clock to the minute, with perhaps an egg or a rasher of bacon as a relish; and I was to retire to rest in country air punctually at ten. By following this advice for a considerable time, my pestilent liver might become more active; but I must abide by it rigidly, unless, as the doctor assured me pleasantly, I wished to be a valetudinarian for life.

He might as well have told me to climb a greased pole, or to speak the language of the Cherokees off-hand. I was living chiefly at clubs, I dined out a good deal, I followed a calling especially inimical to regular hours. I compromised matters by dining at two o'clock, and at my usual hour of seven as well. I dined twice a day and got worse. Meanwhile, I became learned in the physiology of the human frame. The gastric juices became my well-known enemies. The alimentary canal, carbo-hydrates, the tissues, chyle, deglutition, and mastication, were all marshalled against me. The effect of acid in the system, and of want of tone, the connexion between physical ailments and mental depression, the precise symptoms heralding gout, the varieties of dyspepsia, sleepless nights, aches in the head, loads on the chest, weariness of the limbs, dulness of eye, and heaviness of spirit, were all mine.

Meanwhile, I reverted bitterly to the far-off days when the first thought was, not what one would eat, but whether one would eat at all; of long fasts made for economy; of resolute abstinence from lun-

cheons; of cheap banquets of chops and porter, and of perfect health. Malt liquors did no harm then, and nothing eatable disagreed. When you dined out, I said to myself, regretfully, you took the goods the gods provided, and were never the worse for them next day. Pastry? Why you would go into the nearest confectioner's, and buying penny puffs, would carry them off to your chop-house, there to make of them a second course! Cheese, butter, crude vegetables? You took them all in turns, and only did not eat them together because they were called extras, and charged for separately in the bill. Sit after dinner, chat pleasantly during the meal! How was it with you at the cheap slap-bang, or when you stood at the counter of the hot boiled-beef shop, and dined capitably for eightpence, including carrots and potatoes, elbowed all the time by clamorous customers with basins and plates, and devouring swiftly and in nervous dread lest some passing acquaintance should see you through the window? You wiped your mouth furtively before you left, and assumed a lounging air as you turned into the street, keeping your hand in your pocket, to look as if you'd been asking for change, and prepared with a jocular answer if any friendly busybody suddenly demanded what you were doing there! Salt beef is one of the things you are warned against now, even with the accompaniment of light and pleasing talk; though you could eat it with impunity when ragged boys and frowzy slatterns from adjacent garrets, grumbling to the man behind the counter at what they called short weight, furnished the only conversation you heard. Fried fish is bad, is it—I went on sardonically—and pickles unwholesome? Yet there used to be a shilling mid-day ordinary at a tavern in the Strand where the edge of your appetite was always dulled by skate and salt butter, and where you brought it round in time for the sodden joint by furtively administering to yourself walnuts and strong vinegar. Your highness is not to fast more than a certain number of hours! Yet when you had to choose between dinner and lunch, and were not able to afford both, you contrived to fast without serious inconvenience. Your appetite never out-stayed itself then. Your envious hunger at mid-day, when some of your wealthier fellow-students had cutlets or steaks sent in from a tavern near, and when the savoury steam brought tears of longing into your eyes; this hunger only increased by night, or if you gave way

and satisfied it by imitating the fortunate others, the pangs came on again at five or six o'clock, and you struggled with them through the evening, and then went famished to bed. Given a healthy appetite, limited means, a position necessitating clean linen and a whole coat, together with a thirst for pleasure, and a dread of debt, and what are the results upon the life of a youth who is launched upon the world of London without a friend? I know what they were with me: I starved.

The evening's amusement often made the morning's reflection take the shape of a resolve to skip dinner that day; and I have known a visit to the theatre and a modest supper afterwards make me dinnerless for a week. For pride was at stake, and it was sometimes necessary to eat, and, what was worse, to pay for food one could have done without, for the sake of instructive or amusing society; and in so doing sacrifice the genuine meal at a regular hour. Yet no one could be better or stronger than I was then; why, therefore, should I be condemned to this absurd punctiliousness, this fidgetting regularity now?

Thus I mused, savagely and unreasonably enough. "You want to do as I do? Would be quite satisfied if you might make such a meal as you saw me eat at the Ropers?" repeated my doctor, at my next visit, with an irritatingly healthy smile (I had suggested that aspiration, he being a tremendous diner); "my dear sir, I allow nothing to interfere with my exercise. Two hours every day on horseback, one hundred and twenty minutes good jolting on my cob, be my inclination, or my engagements, or the weather what they will, keeps me right." Horse-exercise, in brief, was the only thing for me.

Horse-exercise, quotha! How was I to do it? When was I to begin? To ride for health, to undergo a prescribed number of jogs and shakes in public for the sake of my private weal, to mount outside a prancing beast three or four days a week with a profound uncertainty as to the time and manner of my coming off again—the mere notion took my breath away! I determined to make cautious inquiries among men who rode. They were not all born to the purple, I said to myself, encouragingly. Some must have taken to equestrian display comparatively late in life; who knows but they were ordered it as I have been, and have suffered and surmounted the qualms which make me dizzy?

A flood of light followed, for I was taken in hand by friends who knew exactly what was good for me, who had been through the same thing themselves, and who generously permitted me to profit by their experience. They all had horses to sell or to recommend. Not common steeds, look you, but quadrupeds of peculiar action and special powers, created by Providence and trained by man for the one end of stimulating their rider's liver. They were high-bred, but not too high. They combined the symmetry of the racer with the blood and bone of the massive animals shown at country fairs adorned with plaited ribbons and led by a stout rope. A "bishop's cob" was the thing for my weight, "broad in the back, stout in the pins, but with plenty of 'go' in him across country," and he might be had (as a favour) for ninety pounds. Then there were useful roadsters, stout geldings, quiet hacks, strong mares, ponies, all full of promise, as well as venerable scarecrows which had done great service in their time, and for whom a kind master (and a hospital) were the chief things wanted. I was expected to buy them all, and seriously offended more than one friend by not jumping with avidity at what he proposed. I had changed my mind, I pleaded. I must have riding-lessons before I fixed upon a steed; I must convince myself that I had what they called "a seat" before I bought anything alive to sit upon.

Corporal Bump of the Knightsbridge barracks received me with open arms. Terms, one guinea for six lessons, horses found, and the time and attention of the corporal, or of one of his most trusted subordinates placed at the disposal of pupils. How long did a lesson last? Well, half an hour was about as long as a gentleman (slowly and critically) "who wasn't used to riding at all (depreciatory glances at my legs, figure, and girth, implying plainly that the common run of the corporal's pupils were so many Franconias, who only came to the barracks for a subtle finish to their style)—as long as such a gentleman could stand without bein' what you might call stiff." Were the horses quiet? As lambs. Should I be able to go out alone after six lessons? Well, that depended a good deal upon how I got on; but it was the corporal's conviction, from what he saw of me (a steady gaze all over and round my figure again, but with signs of approval this time, as if first impressions were rejected as hasty)—from what he saw

of me, "that a matter of twelve visits would make me caper up and down the Bow with the best on 'em."

I am naturally gratified at this splendid vision, and begin the labour which is to realise it, there and then. We are in a barn-like structure opposite that portion of the Hyde Park drive to which Mr. Layard granted a supplementary road for riding this summer. I am taught to mount, a mild and worn-looking animal, grey, as if from extreme age, being brought into the centre of the barn for that purpose. "Left foot first, sir, please, and always see as your horse's head is to your left—it prevents confusion as to the side you get up on. Now then, left foot being in the stirrup, a heasy swaying of the body, first putting the bridle through the fingers of the left hand, and a grasping the hanimal's mane with the right, then a heasy swaying upwards, bringing the right leg quickly round as you come hup, and you fall naturally into your seat. Object of having your bridle fixed in left hand is that if horse moves you have him in check; object of right hand fast in his mane is that it gives you purchase and assists you in getting up. Now then, let's see you without sterrups—sterrups, mind you, ain't nateral things with orses, and every one should be able to do without them. Now, then" (in a voice of thunder to the horse), "Walk!" I am on my way round before I know it, and it reminds me of the camel-ride I once had for twopence when visiting the travelling menagerie from school. I hear "Trot!" on other days, and "Canter!" later, the stentorian tones in which both are said being obeyed with embarrassing quickness by the drilled steed; but though both are terrifying, the first walk round remains fixed on my memory. I hope meekly that my liver will be frightened, and give up its tormenting habits by the horror this walk inspires. I am on all sides of the horse at once, my knees come up, my head is on his head, my arms are round his neck, my body wriggles as if I were an uneasy-conscienced snake. The sawdust floor bobs up and down as if it were at sea, and the rough walls seem to close in as if we were in the terrible compressible prison-house and tomb described by Edgar Poe. But I persevere and have more lessons. "I must have them stomachs in!" was one gallant tutor's favourite mode of protesting against the attitude assumed on horseback by another stout pupil and myself; and the position of elbows (I always seemed trying to scratch

my head with the back of mine), the grip of knees, the pointing of toes—"drop a bullet from a rider's hear, and it ought to catch the hend of his boot, plumb!"—the holding of bridles, the [mounting and dismounting, the stopping of runaways, were all drummed into me by degrees. I took the deepest interest in the last accomplishment, for I foresaw being run away with whenever I was alone, and devoted two lessons to acquiring the art of "giving him his head at first, and then pulling the bit backards and forards like a saw;" and parted with my friend the corporal certificated as "only wanting a little practice to ride first-rate!"

My horse bought, and a livery-stable chosen, I became a Frankenstein in the possession of a monster. Nominally his owner, I was actually his slave. He was the destined avenger of my sins. He haunted me at unseasonable hours. He was brought to the door with relentless punctuality whenever my work made his presence an intrusion and a reproach; and he was tired or ill when I could have used him profitably. He was always taking balls, or developing strains, or requiring embrocations. His pasterns, his fetlocks, or what the groom called horribly his "whirlbones" and "coffin-joints," were out of order on an average three days a week.

The riding trousers, cut so tight to the leg, that I looked like a drab acrobat from the waist downward, and which, on the advice of another friend, I had been measured for at the famous Gammon's—an artist who constructs nothing else, and the walls of whose studio are adorned with sheaves of brown-paper trophies, showing the shape of a great variety of royal and noble legs, and each labelled "Tudor," or "Plantagenet," or "Montmorency," in black characters, and with the thick up-stroke Lord Palmerston desiderated for the Civil Service, and showing, mind you, how essential Gammon's cut in riding-trousers is to people of blue blood—these nether garments became tortures by reason of my own engagements and my horse's capricious health. Whenever I put them on, something happened, requiring me to appear anomalously in the haunts of men.

This painful state of things could not last. So far from my liver succumbing, it became worse, and my spirits went down to zero. At last I plucked up courage, and sold my fatal steed for a fourth of his

cost, and felt as much lightened as Christian in the Pilgrim's Progress when his burden left him. After this I hired. Horse-exercise was still said to be essential, and I hired. It cost me money, and it gave me pain. I suppose no man ever acquired such a curious experience of equine eccentricity in a short time. Brutes, which carried every one else "as if they were in their cradles," according to the job-master, always jibbed, or reared, or shied, or bolted, or kicked, when I was on their backs. I have been knelt down with in Oxford-street; I have ambled sideways up the Strand; I have been the unwilling terror of the Park; I was the scorn of cabmen, and the delight of roughs—and still I rode. I was the wild huntsman of the German story, only, instead of being chased by a spectre, I was hunted down by a liver. Now and again I had gleams of enjoyment, sweet but transient, when I was taken charge of by equestrian friends, who gave me a quiet mount, and took me with them; but the rule was solitary wretchedness and abject terror.

I was on the point of saying with the Northern farmer, "Gin oi mun doy, oi mun doy;" but this state of horror must not, shall not, last, for I'll give up the horse-torture at all risks—when the bicycle came to be talked of in England. Desperate men seek desperate remedies. I made inquiries as to the power of this fantastic machine: not as to how much could be got out of it—that every dealer and every expert were forward enough in telling me—but how much it would take out of me. Would it work my muscles, open my pores, stimulate my digestion, and defeat my liver? Might I, if I devoted myself to practice, hope at the end of a given term to substitute it for the dreadful horse?

There were not many velocipede schools open in London when these hopes and doubts possessed me. I made my way to one I had read of in Old-street, St. Luke's; feeling that I was adventurous, if not imprudent. For I had determined to try a mount, come what would. Anything is better than the hideous equine bondage I am groaning under, I soliloquised; and as what man has done man may do, why should not perseverance and assiduity enable me to take my exercise on two wheels, like the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or the men in the Champs Elysées whom I saw last Easter? I purposely ignored my figure and my years, and asked

the director of the riding-school quite jauntily how soon he would undertake to turn me out proficient? He was a very different man to my other riding-master, Corporal Bump. A bicycle student himself, he explained the extreme simplicity of the accomplishment, and showed me how easily it could be acquired, in a way which carried conviction: for he pointed to himself and to the gentlemen at work all round us, in constant corroboration of what he said.

There were men who were having their first lesson, and who were being held on by stout attendants, who puffed and blew in the intervals of giving instructions; there were others who careered gallantly round the arena, darting in and out among the learners, like swallows skimming the surface of a pond; others, again, who, there's no denying, had many tumbles, and ran frequently against walls. Altogether, there were eleven pupils at their studies, and I speedily made a twelfth. I had arranged to have "the rough edge taken off me" by one of the attendants; after which the athletic proprietor would himself take me in hand, promising to turn me out fit to ride into the country on a bicycle in three weeks from that time. It seemed too good to be true, and as soon as I had my attendant out of earshot of his master, I asked him his opinion too, and if by extra care I could avoid the bangs and bumps there and then being undergone by the men who fell? That a month would do it at the outside, and that those gentlemen only tumbled about because they liked it, or were obstinate, he didn't know which it was, was my rudimentary teacher's cheering reply. "Thought themselves so clever that they would try to do without a man long before they were fit for it, and that's the cause of all the accidents I've heard of; but as for you, sir, if you only won't be in too much of a hurry, you'll learn it without a single fall."

His word was kept. I went for half an hour three days a week for three weeks, was supported round the school by the stout arm of my teacher, moved slowly round alone, learnt to use the brake, and to move swiftly, before I made my first attempt out of doors. There were a few aches and a little stiffness, some groundless fright as to internal injury after fatigue, but no tumbles and no misadventure of any kind. At my seventh lesson I was fortunate enough to enlist the attention of a disinterested friend, who made the rest of

my learning easy, who put finish to my style, and has been my companion on many a pleasant country ride since my obstinate liver yielded at discretion. It is only a few months since I sat upon a bicycle for the first time, and I already manage it with tolerable ease and quickness, and I enjoy it keenly. And now, for the sake of other middle-aged men who are troubled with a liver, I shall mention exactly what I can and cannot do. I don't, for obvious reasons, vault upon the machine, run it in races, or attempt giant feats. But my iron steed renders me the greatest service without these extravagances, and indeed does for me all that my doctor exacts. I can run a mile on a level country road in a few seconds under six minutes; I can travel twenty miles on a moderately hilly turnpike road—say the highway to Dorking—in about three hours; and I can always ensure myself a healthy glow or a free perspiration on the shortest notice and in the pleasantest way. My iron horse is never ill, is satisfied with a little oil occasionally in place of the multitudinous balls and washes, and does not eat. It is always ready for its work, and never obtrudes itself unnecessarily. If I let it alone for a few days or weeks, I am not haunted by fears of its being too fresh the next time I go out on it; and I am never worried into riding against my will out of consideration for its imaginary claims. It is docile, spirited, agile, and strong. In other hands than mine it can, I believe, be backed for money to beat any flesh-and-blood horse for a day's journey; and it has never failed yet to meet every demand I have been able to prefer to it.

"But," I hear some horse-loving reader remark, "surely you don't compare an inanimate compound of wood and iron with the intelligent friend of man, or the act of mechanically propelling yourself on the one with the glorious inspiration to be derived from the other? The joyous animal excitement in which man and beast share, until they seem to have but one being between them, where the faithful creature understands his rider's lightest word, and where the rider so sympathises with and loves the trusty friend below him as to spare his necessities and anticipate his wants—surely this is not to be gained from a bicycle, let you be ever so deft and strong?"

Not so fast, kind, courteous sir, or gentle madam. Is it quite certain that the feelings you describe so beautifully are en-

joyed by all who get upon horseback? May there not be a few who, like your servant, only ride upon compulsion, and in a state of misery which is very real? Are there not more valetudinarians than I? Besides, if you will have it, is there not a romantic side even to the iron horse? It is no magnified go-cart, remember, which will stand alone, or can be propelled without skill. It is worse than useless until animated by the guiding intelligence of which it becomes the servant and a part. Without its rider it consists merely of a couple of wheels and a crank or two, and looks like a section of broken cab as it lies helplessly on the ground. But it increases your sense of personal volition the instant you are on its back. It is not so much an instrument you use, as an auxiliary you employ. It becomes part of yourself, and though men of my bulk—let me be on the safe side, and say all men weighing more than fourteen stone—should have a spring of double strength, and should learn to mount and start off without vaulting and without assistance—an easy matter—none requiring exercise need fear that they are too old or too awkward for the bicycle. The four hundred miles ridden consecutively, the hundred miles against time, the jaunts from London to Brighton, the madcap flights down the cone of the Schneekoppe, the sitting in fantastic attitudes, the standing upright on the little saddle while the velocipede is at full speed, are feats which may be fairly left to gymnasts, professional or amateur. They are not for us, friends Rotundus, Greybeard, and Sedentarius. I don't know that we could acquire the power of performing them even if we were to try, and I am quite sure we shall not try, for our purpose is answered when our livers are taught their duty. The pleasures incidental to bicycle practice are so much clear gain, and the primary object, health, being secured, it is intensely gratifying to reflect how much one has learnt and enjoyed in the process. You know every village, every hamlet, every hill, every level highway, every pretty lane, around you for miles. You could re-edit Paterson's Roads. Moreover, you are the cause of wit in others.

"I wish to Blank he'd smash hisself, blank him!" was the pious and audible prayer of a gentleman of the brickmaking persuasion only yesterday, as I glided inoffensively past the Merton tavern, whose open doorway he adorned. "Very like an elephant on castors!" was, I learnt, the

description applied to me by a dear and intimate friend on my taking the trouble to display my dexterity before him and his volunteer company at drill. Again, I am to "Mind that 'ere pony does not run away with me!" while the statements that I have "given that hoss of mine too much corn;" that I shall "bust up like fireworks if I don't mind!" are flashes of humour, giving their utterers acute delight, and which I hear with great regularity every time I go out. He who can confer these simple pleasures on his fellow-man is a philanthropist; and it is astonishing how your benevolence increases as your digestion improves. You laugh at worries which once seemed crushing, and you become tolerant, patient, and amiable. You have safely and surely emancipated yourself from the penal regimen you dreaded, and can live like other people and prosecute your work with impunity. Let others speak of the utility of the bicycle as a means of locomotion, of the enormous distances to be traversed on it, of the vast speed to be attained by it. My recommendations are based on sanitary grounds alone, and I maintain it to be infinitely easier than a strict regimen, and incomparably more restorative than tonic, potion, or pill.

DEPTHS AND HEIGHTS OF MODERN OPERA.

CHAPTER I. IN THE MIRE.

"My dear sir," said Horace Walpole to Hogarth, when the latter began to hold forth about his system in painting, "you grow too wild;—I must take leave of you." Those who venture to speak of periods in music, may as well make up their minds, without self-compassion, or needless irritation, to be pilloried as pedants by the flippant and thoughtless. Yet if the past history and present state of the art (especially as regards the stage) come to be considered, unless we have some such references by way of landmarks, we shall only drift about and not arrive at any understanding of our pleasure, beyond that which is involved in idle and aimless sensation.

Let us see what three musical periods of the past century have comprised; in regard to such opera composers of France, Italy, and Germany, as have enjoyed a European reputation.

First period. Beethoven, Cherubini, Spontini, Weber, Simone Mayer, Zingarelli, Paer, Rossini, Boieldieu, M. Auber.

Second period. Marschner, Meyerbeer. M. Auber, Halévy, Hérold, Adolphe Adam, Rossini, Bellini, Mercadante, Donizetti.

Third period. Signor Verdi, M. Auber,

M. Thomas, M. Gounod, M. Felicien David, M. Offenbach, Herr Wagner.

It is only fair to add that the last half century has, in Germany, produced a goodly number of second-class composers, who might justifiably be matched against those of the second-rate writers of the last century. But in France there has been little or nothing analogous—save the appearance of M. Mermetet, the author and composer of the already forgotten *Roland*. The *Hamlet* of M. Thomas (the most ambitious work of late produced in Paris) lives by favour of the popularity of its *Ophelia*, *Mademoiselle Nilsson*, and by a carpenter's device in the last act. In Italy, the brothers Ricci seem to be already forgotten. So that, so long as M. Gounod continues silent, or, if speaking, shall prove unable to put forward another *Faust* or *Mireille*, the composers who may be said, for better for worse, to excite the greatest curiosity on the Continent at the time being, are M. Offenbach and Herr Wagner: the first, offering a signal example of success won by licentious frivolity; the second, overawing the ignorant, the thoughtless, the jaded, and the rebellious, by the arrogance and obscurity of his bombast. The phenomenon would be a sad one, had not the alternate ebb and flow of creation in music amounted to one of the most remarkable and special peculiarities of the art.

M. Offenbach made himself originally known in London as in Paris, some forty years ago, as a graceful but not vigorous violoncello-player, who wrote pleasant music, not merely for his instrument, but for the voice. Nothing much more meek, nothing much less marked than his playing and his music, is in the writer's recollection. His was the appearance of a slender talent—if there was ever such a thing—a talent which for many after seasons could make but a languid assertion of its existence in the concert-rooms and theatres of Europe. The composer's life was advancing; and such success as artists love appeared as far distant as ever, when some demon whispered in the musician's ear that there was a field yet to be trodden, because heretofore disdained by any artist of repute. There had been coarse comic singers without voices at the *cafés*, there had been comic actors of no less value than Verner and Odry, who could condescend to such coarse travesties as *Madame Gibou* and *Madame Pochet*; but for an artist of any pretension to turn their unmanly and unwomanly vulgarities to account by setting questionable stories to music which could be asked out by their questionable pranks, was left to the gently insipid writer under notice, who had been just, and only just, able to keep his name before the public. To-day the name commands Europe, and commands, too, such gains as in his prime the composer of *Il Barbiere*, *Il Turco*, *Corradino*, *La Cenerentola*, *Otello*, *Le Comte Ory*, *Moïse*, *Guillaume Tell*, and many another serious and sentimental opera, never dreamed of. The iron age has come; the exchange of mirth

for the base excitement of prurient allusion and appeal.

It is not pleasant to have to insist that M. Offenbach has amassed a large fortune and an universal reputation by his late recourse to the bad device of double entendre in the stories selected by him, and in the execution of his favourite interpreters. His music, in itself trite and colourless, as compared (to rise no higher) with the comic music of Adam, though ingeniously put together, and neatly instrumented, would die out because of its nothingness, were not the action it accompanies spiced with indelicacy by women and men of the most meagre musical pretensions. His *Grande Duchesse*, *Mademoiselle Schneider*, *salaried as Sontag* never was in her best days, a pretty actress, content, some ten years ago, to display her less matured charms and more timid impertinences in that "dirty little temple of ungodliness" (as Mrs. Gore called it) the *Palais Royal Theatre*, would never have passed muster in opera had it not been for certain airs and graces which, till the opportunities afforded for their display in the prurient stories which M. Offenbach has set to colourless music, were confined to such singing and smoking houses as the *Paris Alcazar*; to the significant gestures of *Mademoiselle Theresa*, or her shabby imitators in the open-air shrines of the *Champs Elysées*. When the great *Lady of Gérolstein* leers at the brutal giant of a soldier whom she affects, and taps him temptingly on the arm with her riding-whip, who can resist such an exquisitely refined piquancy?

Mademoiselle Schneider's real value as a picaroon actress and singer cannot be better appraised than by comparing her with a predecessor made for something higher than questionable comedy and vaudeville—the lively, evergreen, *Mademoiselle Déjazet*. Though that lady's choice of occupation was anything but unimpeachable, the neatness, vivacity, and variety of her impersonations, and the skill with which she managed a defective and wiry voice, made her the completest artist of a certain disorderly order who has appeared on the stage in our experience. When her *Lisette* (*Béranger's Lisette*), her *Grande Mère*, her young *Richelieu*, and a score besides of distinct and perfectly finished creations, are remembered, it becomes difficult to endure without impatience triumphs so utterly worthless, so disproportionately repaid, as those of M. Offenbach's overrated heroine.

There is one comfort, however, to be drawn from the present state of affairs, discouraging as it appears to be. Lower in the setting of burlesque and in offence to delicacy, stage music can hardly sink. One step more, a step necessary to retain the attention of a jaded public which will no longer be contented with the present amount of indelicate excitement, and all honest, decorous, refined lovers of opera, will protest against further outrage; while it must prove increasingly hard to propitiate the Persons of Quality, who delight to

see the devices and delights of low places of entertainment figuring in the temple of the most graceful of the arts. The last and not the least "broad" of M. Offenbach's perpetrations, "*La Princesse de Trebizonde*," commissioned for *Baden-Baden*, and produced there the other evening, failed to satisfy either the lovers of respectable opera, or those who patronise covert, or overt impropriety. There is a point at which that which is diseased, ceases to produce the old effect, be the stimulus ever so largely heightened, and perishes of its own poison; neglected in its death even by the thoughtless people whose vacant sympathy had encouraged its wretched life.

CHAPTER II. IN THE MIST.

HYPERBOLIC soars too high, or sinks too low,
Exceeds the truth things wonderful to show,

says the old schoolboy's rhyme. We have made an attempt to sketch modern comic opera, as dragged in the mire, for the delectation of many refined and noble personages. We may now look at the condition of the musical drama when it is forced upwards into the mist, beyond any powers of common-sense or legitimate admiration to follow it or bear it company. The one extreme could, perhaps, not have been reached without its being counterbalanced by another one, of its kind, no less strange. Slang is, after all, only a familiarised and vulgar form of bombast.

Among the strangest appearances ever seen in the world of Music, are the existence of Herr Richard Wagner and his acceptance by a band of enthusiasts, many of whom are infinitely superior in gifts to himself. These bow down to worship him as a prophet, whose genius has opened a new and precious vein in a mine already wrought out. The wonder is as complete a one as any already enrolled in that sad but fascinating book—the *Annals of Charlatanry*.

How, subsequent to the partial success of his heavy but not altogether irrational *Rienzi*, Herr Wagner bethought himself of entering the domain of supernatural and transcendental eccentricity, has been shown in the successive production of his *Tannhäuser*, *Fliegende Holländer* (which contains an excellent spinning song and chorus), and his best opera, *Lohengrin*. The first and the third of these have gained what may be called a contested position in some of the opera houses of Germany; but in those of no other country. This is a noticeable fact; seeing that the taste for and understanding of music, becomes year by year less exclusive, and more and more cosmopolitan in England, France, and even Italy. The names of Mozart, Weber, and Beethoven, are now so many household words in every land where music is known. The silly folks who pretend that the limitation of Herr Wagner's success is the inevitable consequence of the nationality of the subjects treated by Herr Wagner, forget, that, in their stories, neither *Tannhäuser* nor *Lohengrin* have more local colour than Weber's *Der Freischütz*.

Euryanthe, Oberon, or Meyerbeer's Robert. But any paradox is easier to fanatical believers than to admit the fact, that if Herr Wagner's operas deserve the name of music, those by the masters referred to, do not; than to confess that the case is one not of principles in art carried out, but of the same utterly annulled: not of progress, but of destruction.

The progress of destruction has rarely, if ever, been more signally exemplified than in the history of *Das Rheingold*, the last work by Herr Wagner prepared at Munich, not produced in a hurry, or a fit of desperation, but deliberately as an experiment, to be followed by other similar freaks. For festival purposes, to delight a monarch willing to believe in and to uphold a favourite who has only thriven by favour of court notice, Herr Wagner has devised a trilogy of operas based on the *Nibelungen Lied*. To these *Das Rheingold* is a preface, and the four operas, or instalments, are intended to be performed on four successive evenings. It is not too much to assert that a year of preparation, were the entire resources of a court theatre placed at the disposal of the composer, would be entirely insufficient to insure the result of which Herr Wagner dreamed: even supposing the same to be worth insuring. Eight months or more have been habitually devoted at the Grand Opera of Paris to the production of Meyerbeer's operas, yet these are child's play compared with Herr Wagner's visions.

His choice of subject, it must be owned, was a singularly perilous one for even a German among Germans. It may be boldly asserted that a large portion of opera-goers have never read the *Nibelungen Lied*, and that the dim beliefs and superstitions of Eld, shadowed forth in that legend, with a rude yet poetic grandeur, appeal but distantly to the sympathies of the most open-minded. It may be doubted whether the frescoes of Schnorr and Cornelius, by which the poem was illustrated in the new palace at Munich, at the instance of the late King of Bavaria, have yet come home to the people as works of art should, though almost half a century has elapsed since they were painted; and though everything that the encouragement and instruction of comment could do, has been done, to make them understood, if not enjoyed. It is, further, hardly needful to point out that a picture on a wall, and a picture on the stage, run chances of acceptance entirely different, the one from the other. Audiences will not willingly frequent representations which are mystical, indistinct, and wanting in beauty. It is true that the absurdity of the stories of *Idomeneo* and *Die Zauberflöte* have not prevented those operas from holding the stage; but the magic was Mozart's, who lavished over every tale he touched melodies so exquisite in fascination and fancy, that the will and the power to find fault with the librettist, must surrender themselves to the charm of the musician. Nothing analogous is to be found in Herr Wagner's productions. The music is to be subservient

to the story and the scenery: the three combining to produce a whole. And this will be felt at every attempt which could be made to separate his music from the stage business and the scenery. Whereas Mozart's opera music has been the delight of every concert-goer, since the day when it was written—and this irrespective of the scenes to which it belongs, Herr Wagner's vocal phrases, detached from the pictures they illustrate, can only strike the ear as so much cacophonous jargon, in which every principle of nature and grace has been outraged, partly owing to poverty of invention, and absence of all feeling for the beautiful, partly owing to the arrogant tyranny of a false and forced theory.

Nor are the dramatic and scenic portions of *Das Rheingold*, if considered apart from the music, in any way successful. The giants and water nymphs, and "the human mortals," whose weal and woe they influence, are manœuvred with a reckless clumsiness and disdain of contrast and stage effect which are wearisomely dreary, save in a few places where their sublime sayings and doings are perilously ridiculous. The stage is more than once peopled by mute persons without any intelligible purpose. The author-musician has not allowed himself, throughout a work which lasts a couple of hours, a single piece of concerted music; the trio of the swimming Rhine nymphs excepted. There is no chorus. The words at least correspond to the story in their inflated eccentricity. Euphuistic alliteration and neologisms have of necessity neither "state nor ancients," and could be only defended were the writer's object to raise stumbling-blocks or dig pitfalls in the way of the sayers and singers who have to unfold his wondrous tale. The result of the combination may be conceived by all who, not having "eaten nightshade," are still in possession of their sane senses. Even the most credulous of Herr Wagner's partisans become tepid, vague, apologetic, and scarcely intelligible, if they are called on to defend or explain Herr Wagner's text.

The above remarks and characteristics, not put forward without the best consideration in the power of their writer, are less tedious than would be the narration, scene by scene, of the dull absurdities of *Das Rheingold*. The scenery they accompany (for the success of the work is held by the congregation of the faithful to depend on its scenery) has necessary peculiarities no less remarkable. The "mystery" opens in a scene beneath the Rhine, where the nymphs who guard the treasure swim and sing; and, inasmuch as they must have resting places while they do their spiriting, are provided with huge substantial peaks of rock, while the stage, almost up to the "sky border," is filled with what is meant to represent the swiftly-flowing river. There is a final grand effect of a rainbow, not greatly larger than a canal bridge, which keeps close to the earth for the convenience of the dramatis personæ, who are intended to mount upwards on it to "the empyreal halls of celestial glory," as the

maker of a pantomime bill might phrase it. The absurdity of such an invention was lessened at the rehearsal by the recusancy of the actors and actresses to take the required responsibility. Add to these wonders mists that come and go on the open landscape without any apparent rhyme or reason, clouds, darkness, sunbursts, all so many hackneyed effects dear to our children and "groundlings" at Christmas time; and some idea may be formed of the shows to exhibit which the music has been bent and broken. The congregation declare that the utter want of success which attended the rehearsal was owing to the stupidity of the Munich machinists and painters. Yet these till now have borne a deservedly high character throughout Germany; and the stage of the Bavarian capital is one notoriously convenient for any purposes of change or effects of space. After all, Herr Wagner's devices and designs to carry off a dreary story and more dreary music, are neither stupendous nor new, howbeit difficult to realise.

In the early days of opera, a great sensation was made by crowds, and chariots, and horses, and descending and dissolving globes, from which came forth singing and dancing angels, in the *Costanza e Fortezza* of Fux. It was not later than the early part of the present century, that Spontini, in his "pride of place" at Berlin, laid himself open to the bitter sarcasms of German composers and critics, stung into a slanderous jealousy of the court-favour lavished on an Italian, by introducing on the stage in one opera, anvils, in another, elephants. Meyerbeer is to this day by some—and these even the defenders of Herr Wagner's proceedings—stigmatised as an empiric, because he connived at the resuscitation of the dead nuns in Robert; contrived the *ballet* of bathing ladies at Chenonceau, in *Les Huguenots*, and combined the three marches in *Le Camp de Silesie*. Herr Wagner has denounced such appeals to the eye, with the sharpness of an unscrupulous pen dipped in verjuice. Those who venture to possess memories, and bring them into the service of critical and historical comparison, must prepare to be abused for the blindness of their antiquated prejudices. That which used to be called a murder, is to-day too often described as a vagary of misdirected insanity or enthusiasm, arising from weariness of life and its burdens, and hatred of conventionalisms.

Last of all—in accordance with the natural order of precedence, it should have been first—a few words remain to be said of "the sound and fury," which signify little or nothing as music, though they fill its place in this strange piece of work. The absence of melody is, of course, in accordance with Herr Wagner's avowed contempt for everything that shall please the ear. This being the condition of matters, it is not wonderful that a common four-bar phrase of upward progression, re-

peated some thirty times or more in the prelude, should please, and (to be just) its effect at representing the ceaseless flow of water, is picturesque and happy. The river nymphs are next announced by a phrase borrowed from Mendelssohn's overture to *Melusine*. There is a pompous entry for the principal bass voice, there is an effect of nine-eight rhythm, borrowed from Meyerbeer's scene in the cloisters of Saint Rosalie (Robert); and these are all the phrases that can be retained by those who do not believe in what has been described by the transcendentalists, as "concealed melody." The recitative in which the scenes are conducted is throughout dry, unvocal, and uncouth. One Gluck might never have written to show how truth in declamation may be combined with beauty of form, variety of instrumental support, and advantageous presentment of the actors who have to tell the story. Then, Herr Wagner's orchestral portion of the work is monotonous and without variety. If his score be compared with those by Weber, Meyerbeer, Berlioz, and M. Gounod (whose ghost scene, in *La Nonne Sanglante*, and procession of river-spirits in *Mireille*, come as freshly back to the ear as if they had been only heard yesterday) it will be found as ineffective as it is overladen.

It may be said that such a judgment as the above is one too sweeping in its condemnation, after a single hearing, to be just. But with some persons first impressions of music, especially be that music theatrical, are last ones. Of course curiosities of detail are not to be apprehended and retained, under such circumstances; but if not the slightest desire to return, on the contrary a positive aversion, be engendered, in persons not unused to listen, not devoid of memory, the fault may not altogether lie in their arrogance or prejudice. The beauties of Beethoven's latest compositions—say his Ninth Symphony, and latest quartets—seize the ear in the first moment of acquaintance; though no time or familiarity may clear up the ugly and obscure crudities which, also, they unhappily contain. It will not avail to plead that it is ungenerous or unjust to judge from a rehearsal; when, as in the case of *Das Rheingold*, such rehearsal was tantamount in correctness and spirit to any first performance ever attended by European critic. Guests, and some at no small sacrifice, came to Munich from places as far distant as London, Paris, Florence, to ascertain what the newest production of the newest Apostle and Iconoclast of his day might prove. The majority of these would hardly have spent time, money, and fatigue, without expectation of pleasure; the more so, as it had been largely circulated that this *Nibelungen Prologue* was to mark a complete change in Herr Wagner's manner, being clear, simple, and melodious. The majority returned to the places whence they came, rather relieved than otherwise, by the fact that *Das Rheingold* was withdrawn indefinitely for further rehearsal (not alteration; such, indeed, being impossible), and that they

might go on their ways, homewards, spared another dismal evening, to be spent in wonder at the mouse brought forth by the mountain, at the pigmy production of the self-styled Musician of the Future.

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF JOHN ACKLAND.

A TRUE STORY.

IN THIRTEEN CHAPTERS. CHAPTER IX.

ON inquiry at the police station in Charleston, S.C., Mr. Tom Ackland, accompanied by Mr. Cartwright, was shown the hat and book mentioned by the Charleston Messenger. Mr. Tom Ackland rather thought that he had once seen the book in the possession of his Cousin John. But of this he could not feel sure. The name, both in the book and in the hat, was printed. The handwriting on the margin of the page opposite the marked passage in the book proved to be quite illegible, but bore a strong resemblance to the sprawling and unsteady characters of the last two letters received by Mr. Tom Ackland from his cousin. Inside the hat they found the mark of a Georgetown maker, partly effaced. The police, after their first inquiries in Charleston, having jumped to the conclusion that they were being hoaxed, had treated the whole affair so carelessly that they had not even attempted to follow up this indication. Cartwright was the first to point it out. In consequence of this discovery, Mr. Tom Ackland immediately proceeded to Georgetown, and had no difficulty in finding there, the hatter whose name and address Cartwright had detected inside the hat. On examining the hat, and referring to his books, the hatter identified it as having been sold on the 29th of last September. To whom? He could not say. So many different hats were sold in the course of a day, to so many different people. He would ask his young men. One of his young men thought he had sold a hat of that description some time ago, but could not positively say it was on the 29th of September, to a gentleman who had one arm in a sling. Right arm? Could not remember, but thought it was the right arm. Hat was paid for in ready money. Was the gentleman on foot, or in a carriage? Thought he was on foot, but could not remember distinctly.

This was all the information Tom Ackland could obtain at Georgetown. He inquired at all the hotels there, but could not find the name of Ackland inscribed in

any of their books. On his return to Charleston, Cartwright told him that his own inquiries at the hotels and boarding-houses in that city had been equally infructuous.

On inquiring at the post-office, they were informed that letters had certainly been received there for John K. Ackland, Esq., and regularly delivered to a gentleman so calling himself, who applied for them daily. What sort of looking gentleman? Very invalid-looking gentleman, always muffled up to the chin in a long cloak, and seemed to suffer from cold even when the weather was oppressively hot.

"Was he at all like this gentleman?" asked Cartwright, pointing to Tom Ackland.

Really couldn't recal any resemblance.

Noticed anything else particular about him?

Yes. He carried one arm in a sling, and limped slightly.

Anything else?

Yes. Spoke with rather an odd accent. Yankee accent?

Well, hardly. Couldn't well say what it was like. But the gentleman rarely spoke at all, and seemed rather deaf.

Had been for his letters lately?

Not since the 15th of October. There was one letter still lying there to his address. Explanations having been given by the two gentlemen, this letter was eventually, with the sanction of the police officer who accompanied them, handed over to Mr. Tom Ackland, that gentleman having claimed it on behalf of his cousin. It proved to be his own reply to John Ackland's last letter to himself.

Had the gentleman never communicated to the post-office his address in Charleston?

Never.

Tom groaned in the spirit. He could no longer entertain the least doubt that his worst fears had been but too well founded. The absolute and universal ignorance which appeared to prevail at Charleston of the existence of any such person as John Ackland would have been altogether inexplicable if John Ackland's own letters to Tom, alluding to the profound seclusion in which he had been living ever since his arrival in that city, did not partly explain it. No such person having ever been seen or heard of on 'Change, or at any of the banks in Charleston, how had John Ackland been living? Cartwright suggested that it was possible that he might have been living

all this while on the money which he himself had paid over to him in notes at Glenoak.

"That is true," thought Tom Ackland; for he remembered that his cousin, in his last letter from Glenoak, had stated that the notes were still in his possession. But nothing short of insanity could account for his not having deposited them, since then, at any bank. Unhappily such an hypothesis was by no means improbable. Who was that Spanish gentleman who professed to have discovered the hat and book of John Ackland's on the bank of the river? Could he have been John Ackland's assassin? But if so, why should he have spontaneously attracted attention to the disappearance of his victim, and promoted investigation into the circumstances of it? His story, as reported by the Charleston Messenger, was indeed so extravagant as to justify the opinion expressed by that journal. But Tom Ackland had in his possession letters from his cousin which made the story appear far less improbable to him than it might reasonably appear to any one not acquainted with the state of John Ackland's mind during the last month. It was very unlucky that there was now no possibility of seeing and speaking with that Spanish gentleman. For the gentleman in question, after having postponed his departure in order to aid the inquiries of the police, had left Charleston about two days before Tom Ackland's arrival there, on being assured by the authorities that his presence was not required. And he had left behind him no indication of his present whereabouts.

This was the position of affairs with Mr. Tom Ackland, and his inquiries appeared to have come to a hopeless dead lock, when, late one night, Mr. Cartwright (who had been absent during the whole of the day) burst into his room with the announcement that he had obtained important information about John Ackland.

It had occurred to him, he said, that John Ackland must, from all accounts, have been a confirmed invalid for the last few months. If so, he would probably have sought some country lodging in the neighbourhood of Charleston, where the situation was healthiest, without being inconveniently far from town, in case he should require medical assistance. Acting at once on this supposition (which, in order not to excite false hopes, in case it should lead to nothing, he had refrained from communicat-

ing to Tom), he had determined to visit all the environs of Charleston. He had that morning selected for his first voyage of discovery a locality only a few miles distant from Charleston, which he knew to be particularly healthy situation. His inquiries there were not successful, and he was on the point of returning to Charleston, when he fortunately recollected that he had not yet visited a little lodging-house where he remembered having once taken rooms himself, many years ago, when he was at Charleston with his poor wife, then in very weak health. He was not aware whether that house still existed, but he thought he would try; and he had been rewarded for his pains by learning from its landlady that some time ago a gentleman, who said his name was Ackland, called there, saw the house, and took it for six months. He paid the rent in advance, and had placed his effects in the house. But, to the best of the landlady's belief, he had not once slept at home since he became her tenant. He frequently came there, indeed, during the day, and had sometimes taken his meals there. But on all such occasions it was his habit to lock the door of his room as long as he was in it. Nothing would induce him to touch food in the presence of any one. She had served him his dinner often, but had never seen him eat it. Sometimes he carried part of it away with him; and once he told her that he did this in order to have the food analysed. He appeared to be under a constant impression that his food was poisoned; and the landlady was of opinion that her lodger was a decided monomaniac, but that he was perfectly harmless. She said he was a very eccentric gentleman, but an excellent tenant. He had been at the house on the morning of the 16th (she remembered the date because of a washing bill which he told her to pay for him on that day, and for which she has not yet been reimbursed). He remained at home during the whole of the day, but locked up his room as usual. About six o'clock in the evening he went out, locking the doors of all the sitting-rooms and bedrooms, and taking the key with him. Before leaving the house, he told her that he was likely to be absent for some time, as he was pursued by enemies, and that there would probably be inquiries about him, but she was not to notice them, and on no account to mention his name to any one. "She has never seen him since. But her description of him precisely tallies with

that which was given us at the post-office. She is a very old woman, rather blind, rather deaf, and very stupid. I don't think she can either read or write. Most of this information I obtained from the nigger gal who does all the work of the house. She eventually promised to have the locks opened in our presence to-morrow; and I have settled that, if agreeable to you, we will drive over there after breakfast." Thus Cartwright to Tom Ackland.

Poor Tom Ackland was profoundly affected by this fresh evidence of zeal and sympathy on the part of Mr. Cartwright. But Cartwright himself made light of his own efforts. "Pooh, pooh, my dear sir!" he said, in reply to Tom's repeated expressions of gratitude; "if he was your cousin, was he not also my friend?"

When Tom Ackland entered the first room, from which the lock was removed, in the house to which Cartwright conducted him on the following day, one glance round it told him all, and, with a low moan of pain, he fell upon the bed and sobbed. There, on that bed, was the dressing-gown which poor John Ackland had worn the last evening on which he and Tom had sat together discussing John's plans for the future. There, in the wardrobe, were John Ackland's clothes; there, on the shelf, were John Ackland's books; there, on the table, were John Ackland's papers. And among those papers Tom afterwards found an unfinished letter addressed to himself. It was written in those sprawling shaky characters which Tom had lately been learning, sadly, to decipher, and which were so all unlike the once firm and well-formed handwriting of his cousin. "God bless you, dear Tom!" (the letter said). "My last thought is of you. I have borne it long. I cannot bear it longer. Nobody will miss me but you. And you, if you could see me as I am now, if you could know all that I have been suffering, even you, would surely wish for me that relief from misery which only death can give. They are after me day and night, Tom. They have left me no peace. Mary Mordeant is at the bottom of it all. She hides

herself. But I know it. I have no heart to post this letter, Tom. I have no strength to finish it. Good-bye, Tom. Don't fret. Dear, dear Tom, good-bye."

Tom Ackland returned to Boston with two convictions. One, that his unfortunate cousin had perished by suicide on the night of the 16th of October; the other, that Philip Cartwright was a most unselfish, warm-hearted fellow. The whole story of John Ackland's mysterious disappearance and lamentable death had excited too much curiosity, and been too hotly discussed, both at Richmond and Boston, to be soon forgotten in either of those localities. Serious quarrels had arisen (in Richmond at least), and old acquaintances had become estranged in consequence of the vehemence with which diverse theories were maintained by their respective partisans on the subject of John Ackland's fate. But time went on, and, as time went on, the story became an old story which no one cared to refer to, for fear of being voted a bore. There were not wanting at Richmond, however, some few persons by whose suspicious fancies Philip Cartwright, against all evidence to the contrary, remained uncharitably connected with the mysterious disappearance and subsequent suicide of the Boston merchant, in a manner much less flattering to that gentleman's character than Mr. Tom Ackland's grateful recollection of his friendly exertions at Charleston.

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VERONICA.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE."

IN FIVE BOOKS.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER IV. ZILLAH'S STORY.

THE widow's reflections as she thought over her interview with Mr. Frost were bitter enough.

Her situation was that of one who, in endeavouring to reach a wished-for goal, has chosen the speciously green path over a morass, rather than the tedious stony way, which, although painful, would have been safe. Now, the treacherous bog quaked beneath her faltering feet. But it was vain to look back. She *must* proceed. To go forward with a step at once firm and light was, she felt, her only chance of safety. And it was but a chance.

Years ago, when Zillah Lockwood was a young woman and a newly-married wife, Sidney Frost had—through the knowledge of certain passages in her life which he had gained accidentally—come to have a secret power and influence over her.

He had used his knowledge at first to protect her against the persecutions of a ruffian, and in so doing he had acted disinterestedly.

Afterwards he was tempted by circumstances, to avail himself of the power he held over Zillah Lockwood, in order to help himself forward in the world.

The case stood thus:

Robert Lockwood and Sidney Frost were early and intimate friends. When the former married Miss Zillah Fenton—a governess in the family of a rich merchant, named Blythe, who liked pictures, and sought the society of the painters of pictures—Frost

had still been cordially welcomed at his friend's house.

Miss Fenton was an orphan, without a relation in the world. Her early life had been passed in Paris; and Mrs. Blythe said she had reason to believe that her father, Captain Fenton, had been a needy adventurer of disreputable character. But against the young lady, no one had a word to say.

At first the young couple were entirely happy. To the day of his death, Robert Lockwood adored his wife. He believed in her with the most absolute trust. He admired her talents. He was guided by her advice.

But when, within a few months of their marriage, Zillah became melancholy, nervous, and silent, Robert was painfully puzzled to account for the change in her.

She declared herself to be quite well; but her husband insisted on her seeing doctor after doctor, in the hope of discovering some cure for the unaccountable depression of spirits under which she was suffering.

It was all in vain, however. Robert was in despair; and seriously contemplated sacrificing his connexion and daily-rising reputation as an artist, in order to take his wife abroad, for total change of air and scene.

A mere chance, connected with his professional business, gave Sidney Frost a clue to the cause of the mysterious malady under which his friend's wife was pining. The clue was furnished by a few words dropped by a man of very vile character, a professional blackleg, who had come to London for a time to escape the too vigilant attention of the Parisian police, and from whose clutches Mr. Frost was endeavouring to extricate a foolish young scapegrace, the son of one of his clients.

His professional and natural acuteness enabled Sidney to make a shrewd guess at the real state of the case. He surprised Zillah one day, when her husband was absent at his studio, into a confession that she knew this man. And after a little gentle cross-examination, the trembling woman burst into tears and revealed the whole story.

Zillah's motherless youth had been passed in Paris, in the home of a father for whom it was impossible for her to feel either affection or respect. His associates were either men of his own character, or young scions of rich or noble houses, who frequented Fenton's shabby, tawdry little salon for the purpose of enjoying the excitement of high play.

Amidst such surroundings Zillah grew to be sixteen: little more than a child in years, but a woman in one sad and sordid phase of world's lore. Her notions of right and wrong were solely derived from her own untutored instincts. These were, in the main, good and pure. But she was ignorant, uncared-for, motherless—and she fell.

Coarse appeals to vanity or greed would have been powerless on Zillah. But the poor child was unable to resist the impulses of an undisciplined heart. She scarcely, even, conceived that it behoved her to resist them.

She believed the passionate protestations of love—protestations not wholly insincere when uttered—of a noble gentleman whom she looked up to as the ideal of everything splendid and heroic.

The story was trite. Its denouement was trite also, save in one particular. This one exceptional particular was the unexpected and absurdly unreasonable despair of Zillah, when she perceived that her god was an idol of clay; that he had ceased to love her: and when he informed her, with a good deal of well-bred dexterity, that he was about to make a *mariage de convenance* at the urgent solicitation of his noble family, he was quite amazed at the girl's violence. He was willing to behave handsomely. But when Zillah started away in horror from his offers of money, like one who suddenly sees the flat cruel head of a snake rear itself from a flower he has been caressing, M. le Vicomte was really shocked. In what Fool's Paradise had the girl been living, to give herself such mock-heroic airs? The daughter of le vieux Fenton! Que diable! His lordship began to look on himself as a victim, and to pity

himself a good deal; which state of mind had the desirable effect of quenching the pity for her, which the girl's pale passionate face and streaming eyes had aroused to a quite uncomfortable degree.

Then came a second blow. Captain Fenton was willing to receive his daughter back again, but on conditions against which the girl's whole nature rose up in revolt. He had discovered that his daughter was attractive. Why should she not assist him in that Devil's recruiting service, which he still carried on zealously, but with very fluctuating success?

In brief, to return to her father's home, would be to plunge into a black gulf of shame. Zillah told herself that she was desperate; that she cared not what became of her; but from her father and her father's associates she shrank with a shuddering, invincible repulsion.

Then the extraordinary reserve force of courage and endurance with which nature had endowed the girl, made itself felt. She was eighteen years old, alone in Paris, and almost penniless. But she struggled like a strong swimmer buffeting the waves. She thought that she wished to die; that the waters should close over her wretched head, and let her be at rest. But her youthful vigorous limbs struck out, as it were, involuntarily.

Then, one watching on the shore, stretched out—not a hand, not a warm, comforting human clasp, but—a staff, to her aid. A dry hard stick was held to her, and she clasped it. It was something to cling to. A woman who knew her history, engaged Zillah to attend on her children, and to teach them English.

For five years the poor girl was a drudge whose physical fatigues and privations were the lightest and least regarded part of her sufferings. But she pursued her solitary way inflexibly. In teaching she learned. She worked with amazing industry, to qualify herself for a better position: and she succeeded. Her blameless life and unwearying activity had softened even her mistress's dry heart towards her; and when *Meess Fenton* left her employment, this woman gave her such recommendations as procured for her a situation in England.

From that time, her worldly prospects seemed clear and tranquil.

After a year or two, she had known Robert Lockwood, and the world was changed for her.

"I loved him so!" said Zillah, sobbing, to Sidney Frost. "I had thought I should

never love any human being more, and that men were all false, sensual, and selfish. But he came to me like God's sunshine after the long black winter. I felt young again, I who had deemed myself old at five-and-twenty. I ought to have told him all my miserable story. I had many a struggle with my conscience about it. But—but—Robert honoured me so highly. He had such an exalted ideal of what a woman ought to be. I was a coward. I *dared* not risk losing him. I had been so unhappy, so unhappy! I think none but a woman can understand what I had suffered. And here was a glimpse of Paradise. Was I to speak the word which might bar me out for ever, back into the desolate cold to die? I *could* not do it. I thought 'when we are married, when he has learned to believe in my great love for him, and to trust me as his faithful wife, I will kneel down, and hide my face on his knees, and tell him.' But as I learned to know him better, I found what a fatal mistake I had made, in delaying my confession. You know Robert. He says that he could never again trust any one who had once deceived him. The first time he said so, a knife went into my heart. Oh, if I had but told him at first, he *might* have pitied, and forgiven, and loved me! For, God knows, I was more sinned against than sinning. I was but sixteen. Think of it! Sixteen years old! Well, this concealment bore bitter fruit. My father has been dead three years, but recently one of his old associates, the man you have been speaking of, came to London, found me out, and came to me for assistance; being always, as all his kind are, either flush of money or a beggar. My horror at sight of him; my dread lest Robert, who was at the studio, should return and find him, showed him, I suppose, what hold he had upon me. From soliciting alms, he came to demanding money like a highwayman. I gave him what I could. Since then he has persecuted me, until life is almost unendurable. I see Robert's anxiety, I am tormented for him. But I *dare* not tell the truth. This wretch threatens me, if I do not comply with his demands, that he will tell my proud English husband all the history of my youth. You, who know something of the man, can conjecture in what a hideous light he would put the facts he has to relate. If Robert were to spurn me and despise me, I should die. Oh, I am afraid! It is so horrible to be afraid!"

Sidney listened sympathetically. He was

(as is not uncommon) better than his creed, which was already a somewhat cynical one. He soothed and encouraged Mrs. Lockwood; promised to rid her of the scoundrel for ever; and adroitly said a word or two to the effect that she had better not trouble her husband with so annoying and contemptible a matter.

"I know Robert very well," said he, "and I am sure he would not rest until he had thrashed our French friend soundly. Now a kicking more or less in his life would not matter to *him* at all. It would put Robert in the wrong, too, and distress you. I undertake to punish the miscreant much more effectually."

How he managed to get rid of her tormentor, Zillah never certainly knew; but the man dropped out of her life never to reappear in it.

Sidney Frost was actuated chiefly by motives of kindness towards the Lockwoods. Whatever this woman's past might have been, she made his friend a good wife. Robert idolised her. He was happy in his unflinching faith in her. But he would not have been able to be happy, had his faith once been shaken. That was the nature of the man. Frost would serve both husband and wife, and would keep his own counsel.

Added to all these considerations, there was another incentive influencing his conduct: the professional zest, namely, with which he contemplated baulking a rascal's schemes—a zest quite as far removed from any consideration of abstract right and wrong, as the eagerness of a fox-hunter is removed from moral indignation against the thievish propensities of the fox.

The two years that ensued were the happiest Zillah had ever known, or was fated to know. She was the joyful mother of a son. Her husband's fame and fortune rose day by day. Sidney Frost never reminded her of the secret they shared between them, by word or look. And she had grown almost to regard the days of her misery and degradation as something unreal, like the remembrance of a bad dream.

But a change was at hand.

Robert Lockwood fell ill. His was not a rapid alarming disorder, but a slow wasting away, as it seemed. A short time before his health began to fail, he had yielded to the urgent solicitation of his friend Sidney Frost, and had confided to the latter a large sum of money—the savings of his life—to be invested in certain speculations which Sidney guaranteed to

be highly flourishing. And as has been previously stated, Sidney in accepting the trust, honestly meant to fulfil it with a single-minded view to his friend's advantage.

Then came temptation: a combination of temptations. He needed a large sum to complete the amount necessary for the purchase of a share in a flourishing legal business. On his obtaining the share, depended his marriage with a woman whom he passionately loved. He used the greater portion of Lockwood's money for this purpose. He described the transaction to himself thus: "Robert shall find this a better investment than any I proposed to him. The business is as safe as the Bank of England. With an infusion of skill and energy such as I can bring to it, wealth, great wealth, is absolutely certain. I borrow Robert's money at handsomer interest than he could easily obtain in any other way!"

All the while he was desperately ashamed and troubled in his inmost heart.

Zillah had been told by her husband of his having confided his money to Frost. She had almost as undoubting faith in their friend as Robert had. But she asked, "You have a formal acknowledgment for the money, of course?"

"He wrote me some kind of receipt, or I O U. I don't think it is what you call a 'formal acknowledgment,' little wife. But from Sidney it is sufficient."

"You will keep it carefully, dear Robert?"

"Oh, yes; of course."

"Because, you know, if Mr. Frost were to—to die!"

Zillah's quick intelligence discovered that something was wrong with Sidney after he had undertaken her husband's trust. He kept away from their house more than had been his wont. He was going to be married. He had obtained his long-coveted partnership. A suspicion of the truth darted into her mind. She endeavoured to take him off his guard by adroit questions. But her woman's cunning was no match for Sidney Frost.

He confronted the matter boldly and with outward coolness, although he inwardly writhed with mortification to be abased before this woman who had been so humbly grateful at his feet. He told Zillah how he had applied her husband's money.

"It is not exactly the investment I had proposed, but it will be, in the end, a far better one than any other, for you all. I have not mentioned my change of plan to

Robert. He is not well enough to be bothered about business. He is the best-hearted, dearest fellow in the world; but *you know* that it is sometimes necessary to hoodwink him for his own good."

At the word, the hot blood rushed to Zillah's face, and her temples throbbed painfully. She understood perfectly the kind of bargain that was being made. She reflected that her first deception was now bearing its legitimate fruit.

She was helpless. She carefully locked Mr. Frost's informal receipt into her writing-desk, and submitted in silence.

"When Robert gets better," she said to herself, "I will summon resolution to tell him everything. I will."

But Robert never got better; and within a few months he was laid in his grave.

CHAPTER V. A MORNING CALL.

MR. FROST drove home to Bayswater after business hours, on the day on which Mrs. Lockwood had visited him, very weary in body and sick at heart.

Mrs. Frost had the most stylish of tiny broughams, drawn by a pawing steed, whose action gave one the idea that it had been taught to dance on hot iron, like a bear.

Mr. Frost used a street cab when he drove at all. Very often he returned home on foot. On this special afternoon, he was thoroughly tired. He had been into the City, into offices wherein his partner would have been much amazed to see him, and on business of which that partner had not the faintest suspicion.

As the cab jingled and rattled along the busy streets towards Bayswater, Mr. Frost leaned his head back against the frowsy cushion and closed his eyes. But he could not deaden his hot brain. That was alive, and feverishly active. He ground his teeth when he thought of Zillah Lockwood. And yet he pitied her.

"If I could coin my blood into guineas she should have her own," said he, mentally.

But if Mr. Frost could have coined his blood into guineas—in one sense he did coin flesh, and blood, and health, and life into lucre—it is probable that still Mrs. Lockwood would not have had her own. For, Mrs. Frost had an insatiable appetite for guineas, and would have received any amount of them with the greedy immobility of a gaping-mouthed Indian idol.

She was an idol that had cost her husband dear, and yet he still worshipped her: worshipped her and did not respect her!

Like the poor savage of the south, who alternately rails at, and grovels before, his tawdry Madonna.

Georgina Frost was a magnificently beautiful woman. Her face and figure were noble and majestic. She was graceful, eloquent, dignified.

"Mrs. Frost looks every inch a duchess," some one said, admiringly. But Mrs. Frost had once stood for ten minutes side by side with a real duchess at a picture show, and after that she told her husband, with a superb, languid smile, that she should decline to be likened to a duchess any more.

"A little, skinny, painted, flaxen-haired creature in a short gown, and with the most atrocious bonnet that ever was perched on a human head," said Mrs. Frost, disdainfully. "I am not at all like a duchess, if *she* is a fair specimen of the genus!"

But nevertheless Mrs. Frost was pleased to be likened to a duchess.

Mr. Frost did not reach his home until a few minutes before seven. Seven o'clock was his dinner hour.

"Dinner ready?" he asked of the man who opened the door to him.

"Whenever you please, sir. Shall I tell the cook to send it up at once?"

"Where is your mistress?"

"My mistress is dressing, sir. She had an early dinner at three o'clock."

Mr. Frost walked into the dining-room, bidding the man send up his dinner directly. He threw himself into a chair, and sat still, with a gloomy face. The complex lines in his forehead were twisted and knotted tightly together.

He had got half way through his solitary repast, eating little, but drinking a good deal, in a feverish way, when the door opened, and his wife came into the room.

She was in full evening costume. A rich silk dress, of the brownish-golden hue of ripe wheat, enhanced the clear paleness of her skin. The dress was simple and ample, as became the majestic figure of its wearer. Its only ornament was a trimming of white lace round the sleeves and bosom; but this lace was antique, and of the costliest. In her dark wavy hair she had placed a branch of crimson pomegranate flowers, and on one marble-white arm she wore a broad thick band of gold with a magnificent opal set in the midst of it.

"Ah, you are there, Sidney!" she said, not looking at him though, but walking straight towards a large mirror over the mantelpiece. She stood there, with her

back to her husband, contemplating her own image very calmly.

He raised his eyes and stealthily looked at her in the glass.

"Where are you going?" he asked, surlily. "You told me nothing about going out this evening."

"Oh yes, I did; but I might as well have omitted it. You never remember. I am going to the opera. Patti sings the *Sonnambula*, and the *Maxwells* made me promise not to fail them."

Mr. Frost sat looking at his beautiful wife with a strange expression of mingled discontent and admiration.

Suddenly his face changed. "Turn round," he said, sharply. She obeyed leisurely.

"Let me look. Is it possible? Yes; you *have*—you *have*—taken that bracelet, despite all I said to you!"

"I told you when the man showed it to me that I must have it. It is the finest single opal I ever saw."

Mr. Frost dashed his hand down on the table with an oath. "By Heaven it is too bad!" he cried. "It is incredible! Georgina, I wonder, upon my soul I do, that you can have the heart to go on in this way!"

Mrs. Frost looked down at him with a slow Juno-like turn of the throat.

"Don't be silly, Sidney. What is the use of your getting into passions? Nothing would go, either with this dress or my black velvet, but opals. And this matches the earrings so well."

"And how, pray, do you imagine I am to pay for this jewel?"

Mrs. Frost shrugged her shoulders.

"How should I know? How you are to pay for it, is *your* business, not mine! When you married me, I suppose you were aware of the responsibilities you were undertaking! Oh, is the carriage there? Tell him to drive first to Lady Maxwell's, Edward. And—ask my maid for the ermine cloak to put into the carriage in case I should want it coming home."

He walked angrily up and down the room after she was gone; breaking out now and again into half-uttered sentences and ejaculations.

"I will not stand it: I *will not*. Heavens and earth! To think of her coolly taking that opal whose fellow it would be difficult to find in London, as though it were a glass bead! She cares no more for me, than for the stone pavement she sets her dainty foot on! I am a money-machine. That's all! But it shall come to an end. I cannot live so.

I will not. Why should I grind my very soul out for a woman with no vestige of heart or feeling? I'll send her to live in the country. I'll sell her wardrobe by auction. Millions wouldn't suffice for her extravagance. I have told her that I don't know which way to turn for money—and people think me a rich man! Well they may when they see my wife decked out in finery worth a king's ransom. Good Heavens, that opal! To-morrow I will make the jeweller take it back. She shall not keep it. It is too monstrous."

The next day, Mrs. Frost, who occasionally made small concessions that cost her nothing, when it became apparent that she had roused her husband's indignation too far, offered to drive with him to Bedford-square and call on Mrs. Lovegrove.

As they drove along eastward—Mrs. Frost looking very lovely in a morning toilet, for the perfection of whose freshness and simplicity she had paid more to a fashionable milliner than Mrs. Lovegrove had ever expended on her finest gown—Mr. Frost lectured his wife as to the necessity of comporting herself with civility towards the Lovegroves.

"I'm sure I don't know how to conciliate Mrs. Lovegrove," said the fair Georgina. "Unless, perhaps, by rigging myself out from top to toe in Tottenham-court-road, and arriving at her door in the dirtiest hackney cab to be found! I really would have borrowed Davis's bonnet and shawl to come in, if I had thought of it: only, to be sure, Davis is always three months nearer the fashion than the Lovegrove women!"

Davis was Mrs. Frost's cook.

Mr. Frost went into his office, saying that he would open his letters and go up to pay his respects to Mrs. Lovegrove by-and-bye. His wife was ushered into the drawing-room, and waited while her card was carried to the mistress of the house.

Mrs. Lovegrove's drawing-room was hot. The sun shone full in through the windows, and there was a large fire in the grate. There was a stuffy fragrance in the room from two enormous jars of pot-pourri which stood one on each side of a gilt cabinet. On the cabinet were ranged what Mrs. Lovegrove called her knick-knacks: namely, a huge dish of wax fruit under a glass cover; some Dresden figures; a Chinese puzzle; a Swiss chalet in cardboard; two or three cups of egg-shell porcelain; a statuette in the so-called Parian ware, representing a Spanish lady clothed *entirely in lace* flounces, and with a foot

about the same length as her nose; and a blue satin box worked with white beads.

The furniture was drab, with red satin stripes in it. The curtains were the same. The carpet was also drab with splotchy cabbage-roses strewn over it. On the mantelpiece, stood a French clock, flanked on either side by a cut-glass lustre, whose pendent prisms jingled and shook whenever a foot crossed the floor. There was a grand piano in the room, dark and shining. There was also a harp, muffled up in brown holland. On the round centre table, covered by a red velvet cloth, were disposed with geometrical accuracy several books. The middle of the table was occupied by a silver card-basket full of visiting cards, on the top of which was conspicuously displayed a large ticket, setting forth that General Sir Thomas Dobbs and Lady Dobbs requested the honour of Mrs. and the Misses Lovegrove's company at a ball, bearing date two months back.

Mrs. Frost waited. The house was very still. She peeped into one book after the other. Two were photograph albums. A third was a little volume of poetry containing verses in celebration of the month of May, which the Puseyite writer looked on exclusively from an ecclesiastical point of view, and styled the "Month of Mary." There was likewise a Peerage, bound in red and gold.

Mrs. Frost waited. She had ensconced herself in a comfortable corner of the couch. It was hot, and the end of it was that Mrs. Frost fell into a doze, and woke with a sensation of being looked at.

Mrs. Lovegrove stood opposite to her.

Mrs. Lovegrove had a pale smooth face, with a pale, smooth, and very high forehead. Her features were not uncomely. Her eyes must have been pretty in youth; well-shaped and of a soft dove-grey. Her teeth were still sound and white. They projected a little, and her upper lip was too long for beauty. It gave one the idea, when her mouth was closed, of being stretched too tightly, in the effort to cover the long prominent teeth.

Mrs. Lovegrove was lean and flat-chested. She wore a lead-coloured merino gown, and a small cap with lead-coloured satin ribbons. She affected drabs, and browns, and leaden, or iron, greys in her own attire. She said they were "so chaste."

"How do you do, Mrs. Frost? I am so shocked to have kept you waiting. Your visits are such unexpected and rare favours, that if I could have come instantly, I would."

Mrs. Lovegrove spoke in a very low voice, and with pedantic distinctness.

"I almost fell asleep, I think," said Mrs. Frost, with much nonchalance.

"You were—excuse me—snoring," replied Mrs. Lovegrove, in her gentlest and most distinct accents.

Mrs. Frost did not at all like to be told that she had been snoring. But as this is an accusation against which we are all helpless, seeing that in the nature of things we cannot be conscious whether we have snored or not, she did not attempt to rebut it.

"Don't you think you keep your room rather—stuffy?" she said, wrinkling up her handsome nose.

"Stuffy? If I apprehend your meaning, I think *not*. You see, you live in one of those new lath-and-plaster houses that really are barely weather-proof. No doubt you find some compensating advantage in doing so. But I confess that for myself, I prefer a solid, well-built, old-fashioned mansion. How is Mr. Frost?"

"Quite well, I believe. He said he was coming to wait upon you by-and-bye."

"Is he quite well? Now *is* he? I am rejoiced to hear it. Mr. Lovegrove has been thinking him looking rather fagged of late. We live in high-pressure times. The friction on a railway, for instance, is so much more tremendous than the friction on an old mail-coach road. And yet it may be doubted—Is anything the matter?"

"No: I—I—only want to sneeze. How very pungent the stuff in those jars is! You don't put snuff in it, do you?"

"Snuff! My dear Mrs. Frost—!"

"I feel as though I had some grains of snuff up my nose."

"My pot-pourri is prepared after a recipe that was always used down at our family place."

"Ah!" said Mrs. Frost, languidly. "I dare say it is very nice when one gets a little—seasoned to it."

Then Mrs. Lovegrove led the conversation into her own ground. She discoursed of ritualism, of stoles, tapers, and censers. After these subjects came the British aristocracy, collectively and individually. Thence, she slid easily to the immense number of invitations her girls had received this season. Finally, reserving her *bonne bouche* to the last, she spoke of their dear young friend, Miss Desmond, Lady Tallis-Galo's niece, and herself connected with some of our most ancient families.

"I am no leveller," said Mrs. Lovegrove, in a kind of self-denying way (as who

should say, "If I did but choose it, I could lay existing institutions as flat as a bowling-green!"). "No. I approve and reverence the distinctions of rank and birth. You may tell me that these are inborn prejudices—"

"Not at all," drawled Mrs. Frost, checking, but not concealing, a yawn.

"Well, I will not deny that there *may* be some tinge of early prejudice. But when we lived at our family place, papa always impressed on us to pay the same respect to those few persons who were above us in rank as we exacted from our inferiors. Papa was a staunch Tory of the old school. But he had no arrogant pride of birth. He used to say—Ah, here is Mr. Frost. *How* do you do, Mr. Frost? We were speaking—or, at least, I was speaking, for I do not think your wife knows her—of our dear Miss Desmond. You cannot think how the girls have taken to her. She is not here half as much as we could wish though. For her attendance on Lady Tallis is most unremitting. But we feel towards her as a daughter. As to my son Augustus—! Well, do you know, I scarcely know how to describe the impression the sweet girl has made on Augustus!"

Mr. Frost smiled very graciously, and seemed much interested.

"We are going to have, I won't call it a party, a little social gathering, to which we have persuaded Miss Desmond to come, on the Feast of Saint Werewolf—that is," added Mrs. Lovegrove, with a melancholy smile, "next Saturday. I dare say you are not familiar with the saints' days?"

"I don't know anything about Saint Werewolf," said Mrs. Frost.

"We shall have music, and endeavour to be innocently gay; none the less gay for having attended a matin service in honour of the saint. Our religion is not gloomy and mirth-forbidding. If you and Mrs. Frost would join us we should be unaffectedly glad."

Mrs. Frost had opened her mouth to decline the invitation, but her husband interposed.

"You are extremely good, Mrs. Lovegrove," he said. "We will come with pleasure."

"Why in the world did you say yes to that oppressive woman's invitation, Sidney?" asked his wife, as he was handing her into her carriage. "I shan't go. She really is too much. If you had heard the stuff she was talking about her family

place! And she devoured me with her fishy eyes. If I had not had the consciousness of being thoroughly well dressed she would have given me a nervous fever."

"Well, that consciousness must support you on Saturday next. For we *must* go. And—listen, Georgy—make yourself pleasant to Miss Desmond."

SPANISH BURGLARS.

If the period that immediately follows a great revolution is not unfrequently marked with crimes of unusual magnitude and daring, it is not to be inferred either that the law has been suffered to fall asleep, or that those intrusted with the public safety relax in vigilance and zeal. It may happen, on the contrary, that the professed marauder finds himself pursuing his vocation under augmented difficulties. The organised bodies called into existence for political ends, often form excellent auxiliaries to the ordinary police, while, lacking something of the coolness which familiarity with scenes of crime and violence imparts, they are apt to save the state considerable time and cost in dealing with the detected ill-doer.

In the case of which we speak, the ranks of crime are swelled by several classes of recruits—the ruined, the dismissed, the proscribed, the suspected, the liable to be suspected—no less than by determined spirits, resolved at all hazards to evade the operation of some new, and to them oppressive, law. Add to these, the individuals who, already at odds with justice, usually prefer the seclusion of mountain and forest; but, in troublous times, draw nearer to the centres of humanity, as kites hover round the scene of a possible battle.

The city from which we write (Barcelona) has, within the last few months, witnessed more than one strange exploit indicating the presence of an element superior to that of your common robber. That two hundred persons, chiefly members of a harmless-looking club, near one of the principal hotels, should make arrangements for the pillage of the bank, guarded day and night, and within a hundred yards of a barrack containing a thousand men, displays both courage and mutual confidence.

That another band should rent a small mansion some distance from the shop of a rich jeweller, and construct a tunnel conducting to the very counter of the latter, which, when discovered, extorted the admiration of a professed engineer, evinced both patience and skill. *This* attempt succeeded. Plate (gold alone) and jewels, to the value of five thousand pounds, vanished through the tunnel; the "estéra" (straw matting) was even drawn back neatly over the opening. It was a poor consolation to the proprietor to remember the kind but impatient señor who had made so many unimportant purchases at his shop, and who was always tapping with his cane upon

the floor, exactly at the spot where the tunnel was subsequently to open!

These, however, are trifling incidents compared with that which, on the ninth of September last, created an extraordinary sensation here.

Close beside the Paseo de Gracia, the Rotten-row of Barcelona, stands, within its garden, strongly railed and protected by a porter's lodge, the beautiful mansion of the Conde de Peñalver. Very wealthy is the count, and, without reckoning that (according to public rumour) his voluntary yearly tribute to the papal coffers touches eight thousand pounds, and his charities to the poor of this large city nearly half that sum, he expends a vast amount in objects of art. Sculptures and pictures, antique vases, porcelain, tapestry, cunning work of every description abound; and, as if in very plethora of wealth, the plate, vessels, &c., in ordinary use in the house, are of massive gold and silver.

For the service of such a household trusty attendants above temptation are a necessity; above all, a steward, or major-domo, upon whose supervision of the rest the master, in his frequent absences, could rely.

Such a man the conde imagined he had found in Diaz Perez, who, for some years, fulfilled the functions aforesaid with apparent integrity. What precise causes led to his dismissal is not known; but that the conde's trust was not rudely shaken is proved by the fact that he was soon afterwards reinstated. There was, subsequently, a second dismissal, and a second return to office, until a third misunderstanding induced the conde finally to eliminate Diaz Perez from his household.

A few days later the ex-steward called upon his master, and urged him once more to recal his dismissal. The conde unhesitatingly refused. Finding him inexorable, Perez sullenly quitted the room, muttering, as he did so, that within a week the other would have cause to repent his determination.

Fortunately for Peñalver the words were sufficiently audible. Quietly, but without loss of time, he applied to the police authorities for assistance to protect his house.

Here there arose a difficulty, which threatened to become a public quarrel, and thus to betray the precautions about to be taken. The alcalde declared the business *his*, the commander of the "seguridad publica," whose aid was required, insisted that it was *his*. Precedence having been given to the police, seven picked men, cool and resolute fellows, were detailed for the service, and lodged, every night, in the threatened mansion. The conde sent his family into the country; and, at the earnest instance of his friends, followed himself. There were, it seems, strong grounds for believing that to take the conde's life, or, at best, to seize his person, with a view to ransom, was no less an object with the expected assailants, than the plunder of the house.

It was on the third night of the watch, at nine in the evening, when the Rambla, the

great promenade (of which the Paseo de Gracia is but a prolongation), was at the fullest, while a few late equestrians were yet caracoling past the conde's house, while the audience in the little theatre, Las Novedades, near at hand, were absorbed in a thrilling representation of "murder in jest," and the overflow of the latter was being industriously caught up by a show-caravan, that a band of ten desperate fellows, each in a different style of dress, and approaching from a different quarter, but armed with similar weapons—revolver and poniard—and animated with one criminal design, approached the conde's mansion. Swinging himself over the railings, the steward, Diaz Perez, opened the back-court gate, and admitted the gang. Stationing three in the covered porch, to avert interruption from without, he opened the house-door with a forged key (he had provided one for every important door and lock in the house), and the seven, gliding in, proceeded straight to an apartment on the first-floor, in which were kept the objects of greatest value. It was their plan first to secure these, then to seize the conde in the more retired apartment in which it was usual with him to pass this portion of the evening.

Hardly had they crossed the threshold, when Diaz found himself confronted by an officer.

"Alto! alto, ahi!" (Stand—stand, there!) was the unexpected command.

Diaz drew his revolver, and either fired, or was in the act of doing so, when the officer anticipated him, by shooting the unfortunate wretch dead on the spot. The rest ran downstairs, only to encounter the levelled barrels of two more carbines.

Their comrades, without, had taken the alarm, and strove to force the door.

"Open—open!" they shouted, eagerly, for the shot had already attracted a group of curious listeners.

"We cannot. The 'polizontes!'"

"The window, then!"

They dashed up-stairs, regardless of three officers, who now appeared, to bar the way. Two more fell dead under the shots directed at them, the rest made their way to the first-floor window, and leaped into the front court. One of these was overtaken, but made a most desperate resistance. It was necessary to fell him with the butt-end of a carbine, and so effectually was this done, that a fourth victim was added to the list of slain. A ball passed through the hand of another; but, nevertheless, he managed to escape, leaving a portion of his shattered thumb upon the railings. Another was wounded and taken. This last was recognised as a noted robber, called "La Liebre," (the hare) from his many escapes from the hounds of justice.

The blood-stained corpses of the four unhappy men, laid out upon the steps of the hospital to be identified, presented as melancholy a spectacle as can well be conceived. About the slain in battle there is a kind of grandeur that deprives the defaced and squalid image of

what so late was man of its more repulsive aspect; but with these poor wretches, sent to their account in the very act of crime, the case was different; and eyes that had gazed on the slaughter of Solferino turned with disgust and horror from the view.

All four were strong, well-made men, and wore good clothes. Two had handsome boots, one a pair of embroidered slippers, the fourth "alpargatas," or Catalan sandals, generally worn by the peasantry, and in long marches by the soldiery. The face of the steward, Diaz Perez, though much mutilated by the death shot, was that of a bold, determined man. The next had been identified as one Estartus, a youth known to the police. The third was recognised as "Lo Xocolator" (no one could explain this term), an ex-brigand. About the fourth there hung a mystery. His dress was of fine texture, his arms were choice and richly ornamented. He wore fine linen and polished boots. His hands were small and white. If a professed robber, he belonged more to the type of the gentlemanly highwayman—the Claude Duval—than to the low and lurking burglar of our day.

It was whispered that he was the graceless son (or brother) of a gentleman so highly esteemed in Barcelona, that it was easy to understand a wish, that seemed generally to prevail, that the secret of his name and parentage should not transpire. It was he who, by his desperate defence in the court-yard, had at least displayed the courage of gentle blood.

This good city, though by no means unfamiliar with scenes of violence, will, for some time, bear in remembrance the tragic raid against the house of the Conde de Peñalver.

AS THE CROW FLIES.

DUE NORTH. ST. ALBANS TO BEDFORD AND KIMBOLTON.

STRIKING up the old north road, the crow alights first at St. Albans, the most interesting spot in all Hertfordshire. This old city of the British kings boasts for its special glory that it was the birth-place of St. Albanus, the first Christian martyr in Britain, and this is its great and special legend:

Albanus, during the fierce Diocletian persecution, sheltered in his house a fugitive Welsh preacher, named Amphibalus, who converted him to the new faith. The Roman prefect hearing of this, summoned both Albanus and Amphibalus to assist in a public sacrifice to the gods of Olympus. Albanus, instantly changing clothes with his guest, assisted in his escape. Soon after, the house of Albanus being surrounded by the legionaries, he was taken before the prefect, and urged to join in the sacrifices. Firmly refusing, he was ordered to execution on Holmhurst Hill. On his way to death, loaded with chains, and pelted and derided by the pagan populace, Albanus performed several miracles. A river obstructing the passage of the procession dried up instantly on a prayer of the holy

man; and the multitude complaining of thirst, a fountain sprung out of the earth at his wish. No wonder that Heaven, to avenge the death of such a man, caused the eyes of the executioner to drop out bodily the moment he struck off the saint's head! The corpse of the martyr lay undiscovered for three hundred and forty-four years, when Offa, king of Mercia, wishing to found a monastery in remorse for a son-in-law he had murdered, a light from Heaven revealed the holy grave. The king placed a crown of gold round the skeleton's sacred skull, and enriched the chapel over it with plates of gold and silver, and tapestry. The history of the relics in St. Albans Abbey is an eventful one. In the reign of Athelstan (939) the Danes, who had an appetite for all plunder, sacred or profane, that was not too hot or too heavy to remove, carried off the sacred bones, which were, however, recovered by a daring monk of St. Albans, who, after long service as sacristan at the Scandinavian monastery to which they had been conveyed, bored a hole beneath the shrine, recovered the treasures, and sent them back to Hertfordshire. In the reign of Edward the Confessor, when the Danes reappeared in England, the monks, afraid of such rough visitors, hid away the holy bones in a wall beneath the altar of St. Nicholas. To cover their pious fraud the crafty ecclesiastics sent some spurious relics to Ely, and with them "a rough shabby old coat," supposed to be the disguise that St. Albanus lent Amphibalus for his escape. The invasion over, the rascally monks of Ely, with charming good faith, refused to restore the spurious relics.

The dispute between the rival houses went on with true monastic bitterness till 1256, when the saint's coffin was conveniently discovered under the abbey pavement, and the Pope pronounced it authentic. The controversy, however, always left the St. Albans relics doubtful. It was said that King Canute had given away a shoulder-blade of the saint. A church in Germany swore by a leg-bone, and even now a church at Cologne claims possession of a good share of the skeleton supposed to have been brought from St. Albans by Germanus and Lupus, two French bishops who came over to England in 1400. The miracles, indeed, wrought by the saint's bones become even more miraculous when we learn that after Bede's time the site of the saint's grave was entirely forgotten, and never ascertained again, till the monks found it convenient to find, or invent, a saint's body for King Offa. The lights, the copes, the golden crosses, the gold and silver figures, the votive jewels, are all gone, but still in the Saint's Chapel, behind the high altar, six small holes in the centre of the blank area mark where the columns stood that supported the canopy over the shrine. There is scarcely in all England a quaint nook so characteristic of mediæval life as the loft in the eastern arch erected for the monk who watched the golden shrine. At one end of this loft there is a small staircase leading to a narrow vestibule and a room which commands

a view of the whole side of the church. At the east side of the abbey there used to be two gratings, now walled up, through which peasants were allowed to view the shrine.

In digging a vault for one Alderman Gape, in 1703, close to the site of the saint's shrine, the lucky sexton discovered the mummy of Humphrey Plantagenet, Duke of Gloucester, the fourth son of Henry the Fourth. The duke's shrine, built by his friend Abbot Wheathanstead, still exists, adorned with seventeen shields, and seventeen canopied niches, filled with little squat figures of the kings of Mercia. This is the duke whose wife, Dame Eleanor, Shakespeare has shown us as walking in penance through London streets for having conspired, by witchcraft, against the life of Henry the Sixth. Proud Margaret of Anjou treated the duke as a conspirator, and had him arrested while attending a parliament at Bury St. Edmunds. Such birds seldom live long in a cage, and seventeen days later the duke was found dead in his bed—apoplexy, avowed some; others whispered murder; but the wise said a broken heart.

The crow cannot leave the abbey's old brick tower without gratefully remembering that that excellent early historian, Matthew of Paris (so called from his French education), was a monk of St. Albans. This honest and candid opposer of Papal usurpations, high in the favour of Henry the First, was a mathematician, poet, orator, theologian, painter, and architect. He died in the reign of Edward the First, having completed the history of twenty-three abbots of St. Albans, and what, perhaps, he thought of less importance, the history of eight English kings.

The savage Wars of the Roses twice deluged St. Albans with blood. Hollinshead tells the story of both conflicts with rough picturesqueness. In the first, in 1455, the Duke of York, with the king-maker Warwick, the Earl of Salisbury, and Lord Cobham, discontented with the Duke of Somerset, the royal favourite, assembled an army of Welsh horsemen, and marching towards London encountered the weak and half-crazed king, with his two thousand men. One May morning at St. Albans the royal standard was raised in St. Peter's-street; Lord Clifford defended the town barriers. The Duke of York's men were drawn up in Key Field, south-east of the town. To the king's envoy the Yorkists replied, "We are the king's true liegemen: we intend him no harm; deliver us that bad man, that traitor who lost Normandy, neglected the defence of Gascony, and brought the kingdom to this state, and we will instantly return to our allegiance."

The king sounding trumpets and offering no quarter, the Earl of Warwick drove back the Lancastrians and entered the town through a garden wall between the Key and the Chequer, at the lower part of Holywell-street. The fight was "right sharp and cruel," till the Duke of Somerset fell at the Castle Inn (a prophecy had bid him beware of castles), and

near him the Earl of Northumberland and Lord Clifford. The Lancastrians, flying through the gardens, left their king almost alone under his standard. The arrows driving round him "as thick as snow," he was wounded, and had to take refuge in a baker's shop, where the Duke of York came on his knees to beg forgiveness, assuring him that now Somerset was dead all would be well. "For God's sake stop the slaughter of my subjects!" said the humbled king. York, with feigned deference, led the king by the hand, first, to the shrine of St. Albans, then to his apartments in the abbey. "Many a tall man was that day slain," says Grafton the chronicler. Historians differ (they often do differ) about the number. Hall says eight thousand; Stowe five thousand; Crane, in a letter to one of the Pastons, six score; William Stonor, steward of the abbey, the best authority, deposes only to the burial of forty-eight.

King Henry, who had early in his reign visited St. Albans, and granted a charter of privilege to the abbey, visited Hertfordshire again in the Easter of 1458. At his departure the careless king ordered his best robe to be given to the prior. The royal treasurer, however, knowing the king's poverty, redeemed the robe for fifty marks. The king unwillingly yielded to this prudent arrangement, but charged the prior to follow him to London for the money, which he insisted on personally seeing paid.

In 1461, the storm of war again broke on St. Albans. This time, the death of York had roused both sides to the utmost ferocity. Leaving over York-gate the head of York crowned with paper, the savage queen had marched to London to release her husband from the grip of Warwick, who was acting as regent in the absence of the young Duke of York (afterwards Edward the Fourth), in Wales. The queen encamped north of the town. The king-maker posted his sturdy archers thick round the great cross in the market place. The Lancastrians came swarming on through a lane into St. Peter's-street; and Warwick's men, being unsupported, were forced back to Barnet-heath, where the vanguard was encamped. The Yorkist Londoners soon fell back before the strong northern men from the Cumberland mountains and the Yorkshire fells. Lovelace and the City bands remained neutral. At the approach of night the Yorkists fled, leaving the almost imbecile king cowering in his tent with only two or three attendants. A faithful servant ran to tell Lord Clifford, and presently the queen flew into her husband's arms. Proudly showing her son, the young prince, who had been by her side through all the battle, Margaret requested Henry to at once knight him, and fifty more of the bravest of his adherents. This done, the king, queen, and all the northern nobles went in procession to the abbey, tattered and bloodstained as they were, to return thanks to God for the king's deliverance. The abbot and monks received them with hymns of triumph and wafts of in-

cense at the church door. Two or three thousand men fell in this battle, and the queen, brutalised and driven mad by her persecutors, ordered Lord Bonville and Sir Thomas Kyriel, two Yorkists, in defiance of the king's promises, to be beheaded, in the presence of herself and child. After this second battle of St. Albans, Queen Margaret's troops plundered the town. When Edward the Fourth ascended the throne, the royal displeasure fell on St. Albans as a Lancastrian foundation; the wise abbot Wheathamstead, however, averted the wrath of the new king, and obtained the confirmation of his charter.

To Gorhambury-park, in June, 1621, retired the owner of the stately house, now a ruin, the disgraced Lord Chancellor Bacon. He had pleaded guilty to twenty-three charges of bribery. In one case he had received from a suitor gold buttons worth fifty pounds; in another case, a rich cabinet, valued at eight hundred pounds; in a third, a diamond ring, costing five or six hundred pounds; in a fourth, a suit of hangings, worth one hundred and sixty pounds. From some London apothecaries he accepted ambergris and a gold taster, and he took from certain French merchants one thousand pounds. The defence set up for these acts is this: it was the custom at that time all over Europe to make such presents to judges. In nearly all the cases the presents were made after the suits were decided, and in many cases the presents were received by Bacon's servants without his knowledge. The Chancellor himself always adhered to this line of defence. He wrote, on his fall, to his royal master: "This is my last suit that I shall make to your majesty in this business, prostrating myself at your mercy-seat after fifteen years' service, wherein I have served your majesty in my poor endeavours with an entire heart, and, as I presume to say unto your majesty, am still a virgin in matters that concern your person or crown, and now craving that, after eight steps of honour, I be not precipitated altogether.

And Bacon says again in another letter:

"For the briberies and gifts, wherewith I am charged, when the book of hearts shall be opened, I hope I shall not be found to have the troubled fountain of a corrupt heart in a depraved habit by taking rewards to pervert justice, howsoever I may be frail and partake of the abuses of the times."

And he wrote to Buckingham, with all the boldness of innocence: "However I have acknowledged that the sentence is just, and for reformation sake fit, I have been a trusty, and honest, and Christ-loving friend of your lordship, and the justest chancellor that hath been in the five changes since my father's time."

Fined forty thousand pounds, sent to the Tower, though but for a short time, and deprived of the Great Seal, Bacon exiled at Gorhambury, has left a record of his own feelings in that solitude. He calls himself, touchingly, "old, weak, ruined, in want, and a very subject of pity." He longs for York House in the Strand or Gray's Inn, where he might

have company, physicians, conference with his creditors and friends about his debts and the necessities of his estate, and helps for his studies and writings. At St. Albans he says he lived "upon the sword-point of a sharp air, endangered if I go abroad—dull if I stay within—solitary and comfortless, without company, banished from all opportunities to treat with any to do myself good, and to help out any wrecks, and that which is one of my greatest griefs, my wife, that hath been no partaker of my offending, must be partaker of the misery of my restraint." But time gradually made Gorhambury less of a prison, and Bacon expressed his resolve to study "not to become an abbey lubber, as the old proverb was, but to yield some fruit of my private life." In those green shades he studied and meditated with his chaplain, Dr. Romley, his faithful secretary Meautys, his wise amanuensis Hobbs, and his loving friend George Herbert. In October, 1625, the autumn before he died, he wrote to a friend:

"Good Mr. Palmer, I thank God by means of the sweet air of the country I have obtained some degree of health, and I would be glad in this solitary time and place to hear a little from you how the world goeth."

In his will he desired to be buried in St. Michael's church, near St. Albans, for, says the great philosopher, "There was my mother buried, it is the parish church of my mansion house of Gorhambury, and it is the only Christian church within the walls of old Verulam." In a niche formed by a bricked-up window on the north side of the church which is built of Roman tiles, is a marble statue of Lord Bacon, which was erected by his faithful secretary, Sir Thomas Meautys, who lies himself beneath an almost plain stone at the feet of his great Gamaliel. The statue, which represents Bacon seated in "deep yet tranquil thought," was the work of an Italian artist, and below it is an inscription from the pen of Sir Henry Wotton, the diplomatist, wit, and poet. "SIC SEDEBAT, so he sat," says the epitaph. Bacon is leaning back in a square-backed elbow-chair, his head resting on his hand. He wears a long, stately, furred robe and voluminous trunk-hose, a laced ruff, sash garters, and shoes adorned with large ribbon roses. His capacious brow is partly hidden by a low-crowned broad-brimmed hat. So sat the mighty Verulam!

At Bedford on the Ouse, the crow alights to look for relics of honest John Bunyan, who was born at Elstow, close by, who preached in a barn on the site of the chapel now existing, and who pined in the darkness of the old gatehouse prison on the bridge for twelve years, during which he wrote his wonderful and imperishable allegory. His rude chair is still preserved in the chapel vestry, and the county subscription library possesses his favourite book, Fox's Book of Martyrs, two volumes folio, black letter, which contain his autograph and some uncouth quatrains written by him under the rude woodcuts.

Another good man, Howard, the philanthropist, is associated with Bedford, having

lived at Cardington, close by, where he bought an estate. Howard was the son of a rich Smithfield carpet-seller, and on his way to Lisbon to observe the effect of the great earthquake that had swallowed half that city, Howard was taken prisoner by a French privateer. His sufferings in France led his mind to the question of the condition of prisons, and the rest of his life was devoted to their improvement. In 1774 he offered himself as a candidate for Bedford, but was not returned, in spite of his popularity among the Dissenters of that town.

Fast northwards from Bedfordshire into Huntingdonshire, where the crow selects, amid the pleasant hills and valleys brimmed with golden corn and dark green woodland, the Duke of Manchester's square and massive castle of Kimbolton. The Montagues, from Montacutus in Normandy, flourished here from the time of the Conquest. Sir Edward Montague, Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, was a member of the Privy Council of Henry the Eighth, and one of that bluff tyrant's sixteen executors. The castle was the scene of that last touching episode in the history of Katharine of Arragon, which Shakespeare has so exquisitely dramatised. The ill-used, insulted, deserted woman, had objected to Fotheringay as unwholesome, and Kimbolton, which she equally disliked, was then chosen for her. A bill had just been published against the king in Flanders, and he was raging mad at the Pope and at all his adherents who would not legalise the divorce. The queen's confessors he had thrown into Newgate. Her nominal income of five thousand a year, as Prince Arthur's widow, was paid her only in dribblets. The brutal king even refused to let her see her child. The queen's castellans regarded with suspicion even her last interview with her nephew Charles the Fifth's ambassador. Henry shed tears over his wife's last reproachful letter, but instantly sent a lawyer to seize the property of the dead woman. The queen, in her will, desired five hundred masses to be said for her soul, and a pilgrimage to Walsingham to be made on her behalf, and also begged that all her gowns might be made into church ornaments. She had wished to be buried in a convent of Observant Friars, but the king had her interred near the great altar at Peterborough, an abbey which he spared for her sake. Old Scarlett, the sexton, who buried her, lived also to bury Mary, Queen of Scots, in the same cathedral.

At the obsequies performed at Greenwich the king and the court appeared in black, but Anne Boleyn dressed herself in yellow, and lamented the good end which her rival had made. A chamber hung with tapestry is still shown at Kimbolton as that in which Queen Katharine expired. The hangings conceal the door to a small ante-room. The duke also preserves a travelling trunk, which is covered with scarlet velvet, and bears upon its lid the queen's initials and a regal crown. As the latest historian of this unhappy woman has well observed, among many eulogists,

"one mighty genius who was nearly her contemporary has done her the noblest justice." In fact, Shakespeare alone has properly appreciated and vividly portrayed the great talents as well as the moral worth of the right royal Katharine of Arragon.

Edward, the second Earl of Manchester, became a great parliamentary general, and helped to defeat Rupert on Marston Moor. Cromwell, who hated all half-and-half measures, accused the earl of refusing to complete the rout and final destruction of the king's army; and the earl, in return, accused Cromwell of urging him to conspire against the parliament. Cromwell finally was too much for the earl, and the parliament deprived the lukewarm earl of all his employments; a severity he returned by helping to bring back Charles the Second.

IN THE TROPICS.

THE blue waves beat upon the coral reef,
The palm-trees bow their coronals of green,
Kissed by the soft south-west wind. Myriads
Of gold and purple-plumaged orioles,
Of scarlet-crested, snowy-winged birds,
Dash, dazzling meteors of living fire,
Across the forest track.

The tiger sleeps,
Crafty and cruel-brooding, in his lair,
Waiting the veil of night, as Evil hides,
Shunning the bright rays of the glorious sun,
And batten on darkness. Crimson flowers
Hang from the creepers, where the boa lurks,
Coiling her deadly folds, with venomous eye
Fixed on the path beneath. The leopards crouch,
Half wakeful in the jungle; scene so fair,
At every onward footstep, threatens—*Death!*
Low, the red sun declines; within the brake
The stealthy jaguar begins to stir,
The jackal sounds the prelude of attack,
To warn our lingering footsteps. Safety now
No longer waits upon the traveller;
But discord, rapine, and a thousand foes,
Gaunt-eyed, and crimson-robed, and ravenous,
Rise into being 'neath the mask of Night.

MY NEIGHBOURS.

—Like a sick man's dreams,
Varies all shapes, and mixes all extremes.—FRANCIS.

In a convalescent state, after a serious illness that had rendered me wholly incapable of mental exertion, I sat in my arm-chair by the fire, while on the table near me lay a volume of Eugene Sue's *Wandering Jew*, and another containing a portion of the history of the renowned Pantagruel. I had been dreamily turning over the leaves of both, and had been much impressed by a chapter in the one last named, that described how Alcofribas (as Rabelais called himself) ascended the giant's outstretched tongue, and thus entering his mouth, discovered therein a new world, the inhabitants of which had the vaguest notions of everything that passed beyond their own sphere:

"Is not every one in London," I asked

myself, "much in the condition of the man who planted cabbages within the precincts of Pantagruel's jaws, and only had the faintest knowledge that there was another world illumined by a sun and moon? I have lived at least six years in this house, and what do I know of a certain Miss Thugleigh, who lives next door, and of whose ugly name I should never have heard, had not a letter, directed to her, been brought to me accidentally by the postman? She has never left home at any time when I have been looking out of window; she is never in her garden, which, by the way, is in a most neglected state. I am only reminded of her existence by an occasional noise. In London and its suburbs, save by some rare accident, is not every one in pretty nearly the same position as I am with respect to Miss Thugleigh? I know rather more of the man who is her next-door neighbour on the other side, and whose name seems to be Bubblesworth, for the artist who comes to shave me tells me that he has his hair curled every morning, evidently intending to hold up a good example before my eyes. But knowledge like this is the very reverse of exhaustive."

The pursuit of this foolish train of thought had caused me to rise from my chair, and I was staring vacantly into the glass on my mantelpiece, when my attention was suddenly arrested by a remarkable phenomenon. The movements of the reflected figure did not correspond to my own. If I stirred it remained still, or moved in a different manner. The eyes alone, which were fixed on mine, obeyed the ordinary laws of reflection. Presently my own arms being folded, the figure extended one of its hands. I extended a hand too, and the figure, slightly inclining forward, grasped it firmly. Instinctively I endeavoured to extricate myself, but so far was I from succeeding, that I felt myself pulled towards the glass. The figure, then, was a reality, and a very muscular reality too, for I could not resist it. Whither was I going? It was soon evident that there was no glass at all, but an aperture in the wall surrounded by a gilt frame, behind which was a room precisely corresponding to my own. The position was alarming.

On—on I was pulled, and for a few seconds found myself enveloped in darkness. I seemed conscious of nothing but vacuity, when suddenly the grasp ceased, and I was once more in the light, seated at a table, opposite to a venerable old lady, whose white hair, neatly parted from the

middle of the forehead, was surmounted by the most respectable of caps. She was absorbed in the perusal of a large book, which lay open before her. Not knowing how I should be received, I refrained from interrupting her studies, and took a leisarely survey of the room.

In shape it was a prism. The ceiling and floor were equilateral triangles, and the walls were, consequently, three in number. The table, too, was triangular, so were the seats of the chairs, each of which had three legs, and a huge bird-cage, containing a vulture, was in keeping with the furniture. Door, window, or fireplace, there was none; the only admission to fresh air being afforded by a triangular ventilator, immediately under the ceiling. On the few shelves, which broke the monotony of the walls, were placed some old books, two or three bottles, and several knives or daggers of Oriental fashion. But the most singular object was a hideous Indian idol, like those that represent the horrible wife of Siva, which stood in a corner, and before which was a prismatic stone, exactly similar in its proportions to the room.

"Well, George," said the old lady, suddenly raising her eyes from her book, and looking at me full in the face, "so you have condescended to visit me at last."

Though my name is not George, I felt that I was the person addressed, so I began politely to deny the condescension.

"Pooh-pooh! never mind compliments. You are here, and that is the great matter. I see you are rather astonished at the appearance of my room. It is somewhat close; but then it's very snug, and quite good enough for a simple body like me."

"Unique in its structure, at any rate," I said, endeavouring to admire. "I am rather curious to know how one enters it."

"Indeed, I wonder at that, when you yourself found your way so readily," she replied, with a slight laugh.

I felt uneasy, for I did not care to describe my passage through the glass, but the old lady did not seem anxious for an explanation, since she immediately added, "It would not do to have a room too easy of access, when things of this sort are flying about."

With these words, she opened a drawer in her table and took out a printed hand-bill, with the formidable heading, "One Hundred Pounds Reward." This she placed in my hands, and I learned from its contents that a butcher-boy had been

missed by his employers, under circumstances that led to the suspicion of murder, and that the reward was offered for the apprehension of the supposed assassins.

"Luckily he did not live in the neighbourhood. But on the whole it is better not to venture beyond beggars and ticket-of-leave men."

"Venture what?" I inquired.

"Immolation!" was the reply.

"Immo——" I faltered. "Then it is your opinion that the unhappy boy was really murdered?"

"Really immolated? Of course I do. It would be very absurd if I thought otherwise, when I performed the sacrifice with my own hands."

"Atrocious wretch!——" I began.

"Hoity-toity!" interposed the old lady.

"Don't let us lose our tempers."

And really when I looked at her calm face, I felt that wrath was impossible. She was some harmless lunatic, who owned to crimes she had never committed.

"I bore the boy no ill-will," she proceeded, "he was as well-behaved a lad as one would wish to see. I would gladly have given the preference to a mischievous little vagabond, who rings my bell regularly every Saturday afternoon, in celebration, I suppose, of his half-holiday; but the butcher-boy came handy, and when one can't have what one wants, one must take what one can get."

"But why mur—that is, immolate anybody?" I inquired, intending to humour her delusion.

"That I can easily explain," she replied. "You have doubtless heard that there is in India a secret sect of devotees, who term themselves Thugs."

"I have read of that detestable fraternity in the Wandering Jew of Eugene Sue," I responded.

"Your strong expression, at which I take no offence, shows that you are not unacquainted with our principles. I am a Thug, and veil the fact by assuming the name of Thugleigh."

It struck me that a thicker veil might have been afforded by the name of Smith or Brown, but I did not interrupt.

"I therefore, on principle," she proceeded, "offer at least once a month a human sacrifice to the Goddess Bowanee, whose effigy you see in that corner."

"I would rather not have known this circumstance," said I. "Indeed, as your society is, as you say, secret, it seems to me that you break your rules by making me your confidant."

"Not at all," she remarked, smiling. "I am convinced that my secret will not go any further."

"You have a high opinion of my discretion," I rejoined, endeavouring to look flattered.

"I have no opinion whatever on the subject," she calmly remarked. "For all I know to the contrary, you may be the veriest chatterbox in the universe. But of this I am sure, that dead men tell no tales, and I have selected you for the next victim. Now, don't be alarmed. If you do not like it, you shall not suffer any pain." (While talking thus she advanced towards a shelf.) "It would, indeed, be more regular to strangle you with a white scarf, or to slay you with one of these knives; but as you are a victim of a superior order, I can afford to dispense with extreme formalities, and allow you to swallow the contents of the little vial I now place in your hands."

"Poison?" I inquired, with horror.

"Yes," she answered, "and of so efficacious a kind that it will extinguish life in a moment, without the slightest pain or inconvenience. When you have expired, your body will be conveyed through this aperture, through which many—ah, how many!—have passed before."

With this she touched a spring, whereupon the idol sunk behind the stone, and exhibited a hideous face, painted on the wall, with a wide mouth opening on darkness.

Horror gave place to indignation.

"This is all very well, madam," said I; "but if you are a lunatic, I am not bound on that account to swallow poison, and to be put out of sight like a posted letter."

"Resistance is useless," she said, drawing forth a revolver and pointing it full in my face. "This might hurt you, whereas the vial causes no suffering whatever. You had better choose the latter."

I had never realised till that moment the feelings of Fair Rosamond.

"And when," she proceeded, "the goddess grows impatient, the jaws of her provider are more extended."

This was the fact, and I was inspired with a sudden resolution. One road of escape was obvious, and, in a fit of desperation, I leaped into the open mouth, head-foremost, like a harlequin.

Again a few moments of darkness, during which I heard a shriek of female rage, and when this had passed, I found myself in a neat little study, looking at a slim gentle-

man, trimly dressed, and especially remarkable for the perfect arrangement of his hair. He seemed to be rather startled.

"Well, James," he said, "you need not have taken me unawares like this. I did not so much as hear you knock."

My name is not James; but rejoiced as I was to find myself in a room where the image of Bowanee was not part of the furniture, I did not deem it expedient to correct the error. Indeed I was beginning to stammer out an apology, when he fortunately prevented me by saying, quickly:

"No matter—no matter. I am only too happy to show you the successful result of my little experiments."

I expressed, in turn, my happiness at the proposed instruction; he proceeded thus:

"The greatest discoveries in practical science often, as you are aware, have a comparatively childish beginning. The steam-engine itself was, in its earliest form, a toy; and it was by means of a boy's kite that Franklin drew the electric spark from the clouds. I have devoted myself to bubbles. You smile," I had done nothing of the sort, "I do not refer to those hollow commercial enterprises which are stigmatised by that name, but to bonâ fide bubbles such as urchins are in the habit of blowing from an ordinary tobacco-pipe. Just watch me now."

So saying, he dipped the bowl of an ordinary pipe into a small basin of fluid, and, with evident exertion, blew a fair round bubble, which, when detached, rested upon the table.

"Just touch that," he said.

I did so: the bubble did not burst, but was as firm as if it had been made of glass.

"Now you see the nature of my invention," he continued, smiling with evident satisfaction. "I add to the saponaceous fluid, vulgarly termed soap-and-water, an ingredient the nature of which I shall not reveal, and which has the effect of rendering the bubble permanent. You may dash that bubble against the ground, or strike it with a hammer—still it will not break. All you have to avoid is a contact with fire. Observe!"

He lighted a lucifer-match, and applied it to the bubble, which, with a report like that of a small cannon, exploded so instantly, that he was thrown to the ground as if stricken by a thunderbolt. However, he rose smiling, and, rubbing the part that had been most inconvenienced by the fall, quietly said:

"There is no occasion to repeat the experiment?"

"Decidedly not," was my remark. "There is one point, however, on which I am curious. I cannot sufficiently admire the singularity of your discovery, but I am at a loss to perceive its use."

"Oh, that I can easily explain," was his reply. "Not only have I discovered the ingredient which hardens the saponaceous fluid, but I have invented a method of blowing which enables me to enclose whatever object I please within the precincts of a bubble. Look here!"

He opened a cabinet, and showed me a collection of humming-birds, butterflies, statuettes, and other objects that are commonly put under glass cases, each enclosed in a hardened bubble. I acknowledged that the invention was admirable.

"Yes," he said, "I think it is; and it will soon go forth to the world as Bubblesworth's patent. But I have not come to that yet. Just sit for a few minutes in that chair, while I prepare to astonish you with an application of my principle."

I complied with his request, and he slipped behind the chair. Presently I was aware that there was something like a medium between me and the surrounding objects, and, throwing my head back, perceived that Mr. Bubblesworth had actually enclosed me in an enormous transparent sphere, streaked with brilliant colours, which resisted my touch as though it had been of iron. I was manifestly a prisoner, but the spherical wall of my prison gradually receded till it was beyond the reach of my outstretched hands. Soon the gay prismatic colours that played in streams around me began to assume definite shapes; some of which apparently were distant from me several miles, while others were in my immediate vicinity.

I was standing near a neat whitewashed cottage, in front of which, seated by a table, on which stood a foaming jug, was a jolly old gentleman, of the conventional type, which we often find repeated in engravings of the last century as the embodiment of rural felicity in advanced years. To sit alone smoking and drinking all through a whole summer evening, with a fat face that smiled benignantly upon nothing, was long the summit of human bliss in the eyes of many well-meaning artists who wished to contrast the innocent pleasures of the country with the riot and dissipation of the town.

"This is an uncommonly pretty country, sir," I observed to the ideal farmer.

"Yes, sir, it is," he replied, "though it

is so far from the station; and perhaps for that very reason. Ah, there were no railroads when I was a boy!"

"You came here young?" I asked.

"Came here? I was born here, in this very house, and this very day is my eightieth birthday."

I instinctively glanced upwards towards the sky, as if to catch the face of Mr. Bubblesworth, to whom I would willingly have referred the doubts that arose in my mind. But nothing was above me save the pure azure. I could address no one but the old gentleman himself.

"My question may appear very ignorant, sir," I said, "but what county is this?"

"This," he answered, "is Soapshire, on the borders of Bubblesex."

I discovered at once the etymological origin of these strange names; but still I scarcely durst trust my ears. "I have heard," I said, "of Shropshire and Middlesex."

"Have you?" interrupted the old gentleman; "that's more than I have. Maybe you have travelled in foreign parts. However, this is Soapshire, and if you cross the river you see yonder, you'll find yourself in Thughamptonshire."

Soapshire—Bubblesex—Thughamptonshire—odd names! Not only was I still somehow in the old world, but there was a slight connecting link between me and my immediate neighbours.

"Did you ever go to any church in Thughamptonshire?" I asked.

"Not very often; but I have done such a thing," was the reply.

"Ha! and in the course of his sermon, did the minister make any mention of—of Bowanee?"

"No; I can't say as he did—leastways, while I was awake. But I tell you what. In the churchyard of Thugton, which is the chief market-town, there is a little hill or mound like, which they call Bony-Barrow; and the story goes that a great many butcher-boys are buried there who were sacrificed by the Druids, as they call them, in the days of the ancient Britons."

"Ha!" I exclaimed, with intense interest.

"A very curious thing that barrow. Some men who were digging there some twenty years ago found a stone figure of a woman with a lot of hands, and you may see it now in Thugton Museum. But it is getting dusk. I think I may as well send up my fire-balloon."

"Fire-balloon?"

"Yes; my great-grandson, who goes to the grammar-school of Thugton-cum-Sue, sent me one as a present for my eightieth birthday. You must know that I was born at eight o'clock in the evening, so it was the boy's fancy that I should send it up exactly at that time, that he might be reminded of the old man at a distance. It is a singular thing that a man who was born at eight o'clock should live to be eighty."

I might have told him that, inasmuch as I had encountered many things much more singular, this last marvel was somewhat ineffective; but as the effect of the lucifer-match when applied to the surface of the bubble was present to my mind, I did not care to dispute about trifles.

"I think that fire-balloon might be dangerous," I remarked.

"Not at all—not at all," replied the old gentleman; "and if it does set alight a haystack or so, I don't mind on an occasion like this. I may never live to see any other birthday."

"That I think exceedingly probable," I remarked, "if you persist in sending up this balloon."

"Why, what has that to do with it? You don't suppose I shall set the sky on fire!" (That was the very thing I did suppose.) "I have heard of folks setting the River Semaht on fire, but as for the sky—ho! ho! ho!"

I shall not describe the preparations made for the ascent of the fire-balloon. The old gentleman unfolded it, lighted the tow in the little basket that hung from it as a car, and, as it slowly arose, watched it with delight and admiration. Up—up—it went; and down—down—went my heart. In the distance it appeared little more than a spark. Bang! Cottage—old man—trees—all were gone.

I was sitting in my arm-chair by the fire, and a coal, which had just popped out of the grate lay smoking on the hearth.

LIGHT-SHIPS.

"A LIFE on the ocean wave, a home on the rolling deep," may be jolly enough under certain circumstances: only to be really pleasant and comfortable the ocean wave should not be much more than a ripple, and the deep should roll very gently indeed.

And though most people would enjoy a short experience of smooth waters and beautiful weather, few, if any, would care to live entirely on the ocean wave, or to have a home altogether on the rolling deep.

These reflections occurred to us as we were passing the Nore light-ship a short time since. We wondered what kind of life was theirs to whom that vessel was, to a great extent, a home. We wondered and passed on; we, bound for the French coast, running as hard as a fair wind and ebb-tide could take us; she, solitary, moored at her station, riding quietly, with one object only: to stay where she was. Our wonder eventually assumed the form of inquiry, and we gathered a number of facts concerning light-ships and their crews which may not be uninteresting to our readers.

At night by the seaside the lights from these vessels may be seen, green, red, or white, revolving or fixed, shining out bright and clear far away to sea. Be the weather fair or foul still the lights gleam out, brilliant and steadfast if the night be calm and fine, but occasionally lost sight of in rough weather as the light-ship goes down into the hollow between the waves.

These vessels are placed where light-houses could not be built, and are made to serve two very useful purposes, viz., to tell sailors where they are, or to warn them of adjacent shoals. It is very easy for a sailor to lose himself at sea, notwithstanding the progress of science in aiding navigation. Sailors are, after all, only fallible mortals, and one slight mistake of theirs, an imperfection in the compass, or a strong current, may put them out of their reckoning in a very short time. And with a dark, angry-looking sky above, and nothing but sea all round, how are they to discover their error? But if across the waters they discern the light from one of those outposts of civilisation, they soon discover their exact whereabouts by the distinctive character of the light, and by consulting the chart, and are then able to go on their right way rejoicing.

Round the English coast alone there are between forty and fifty light-ships; great, ugly-looking vessels, always painted red, with their names in large white letters on both sides. Day after day, month after month, in fact, for seven years each vessel has to ride at its appointed station. After those seven years it is taken in for a short time; the barnacles and weeds are cleared off the bottom of the vessel, she undergoes a thorough overhaul and repair, and is then sent out again to begin another seven years of pitching and tossing. Spare light-ships are always ready to take the place of any that are brought in for the regular septennial overhauling, or to repair damages.

It is a matter for wonder that the vessels ride so long at their allotted stations without breaking loose, and herein lies the art of light-ship management. It tells of careful supervision and efficient service, that only about once in every ten years is a light-ship known to break away from her moorings. She is usually moored with a single mushroom anchor, weighing between thirty and forty hundredweight, which sinks into the ooze or sand at the bottom of the sea, becoming completely embedded; the cable which holds it would scarcely do for a watch-chain, each link being made of one and a half

inch iron, and being about seven inches in length. These cables have to undergo a very severe process of testing, each link, before it is made use of for mooring purposes, having to bear a strain equal to a weight of thirty tons. Each vessel is supplied with about two hundred and ten fathoms, a quarter of a mile or so, of this cable. Those which are moored in very deep water have as much more as the depth of water renders necessary. It is by the skilful management of the cable that a light-ship is enabled to ride out the fiercest storm in safety. In smooth weather they have only a short cable out, but when it is rough and the billows run high, they let out sufficient chain to enable her to mount up to the very top of the great waves. She is never allowed to go to the extreme length of her tether; as she rises she takes as much chain as she wants, still leaving a quantity on the ground, whereby she seldom jerks at the anchor, or has a tight strain on the cable. The constant rise and fall of the cable, and the swinging of the vessel round with the tide, often occasion strange combinations, and the great chains have been known to tie themselves in knots, or to do themselves up in such tangled bunches, that it was with great difficulty they were disentangled, the latter operation having to be generally performed by means of sledge-hammers and anvils.

Some readers perhaps wonder how the lights are maintained bright and clear on very stormy nights, and why the rolling and plunging of the vessel does not upset all the lighting arrangements. It is managed in this way. The lantern is made to surround the mast so as to show light all round; it is hoisted up at night, but is lowered on to the deck in the daytime. Inside the lantern is a circular framework, on to which are fitted a number of argand lamps with reflectors behind; each lamp and each reflector swings by means of gimbal work, so that however much the ship may lurch or roll the lamps and reflectors are kept perpendicular by their own weight. This apparatus requires a good deal of attention to keep it always in easy working condition, more especially when the vessel has revolving lights with clockwork machinery to turn them.

It is the business of the crew to keep good lights burning; to work (with a windlass) the cable in and out as occasion may require; to fire warning signals if they see a vessel standing into danger, and distress signals if assistance is wanted from shore; in fact to make themselves as serviceable as they can to passing ships. The whole crew is composed of eleven men; a master, a mate, three lamp-lighters, and six seamen; but of these, four are always on shore in turn, so that seven men only are on board at one time; the master and mate have alternate months afloat and ashore, the rest of the crew have two months afloat and one month ashore. At the beginning of each month the Trinity steamers go out with *numbers of unhappy-looking men who are going to be left at sea for two months, and return with much merrier crews who are about to have their month ashore.* These latter often come

back laden with toys, boots, &c., which they have made in their spare time on board the light-ship, which articles they sell on shore.

It is no joke being on board a light-ship in rough weather. Here is a melancholy incident which occurred a few years since. Two seamen of the light-vessel in Morecambe Bay had the watch one terrific night; one had gone below for a moment or two, and while there he felt a tremendous sea strike the ship; he made his way up again, but his comrade was not to be seen: he had no doubt been caught up by the furious sea and carried overboard. Another huge wave presently broke over the ship, and this time seized and carried off the remaining seaman. The officer in charge, in pursuance of the regulation requiring him to go up frequently on deck in rough weather to see that all was right, went on deck and missed the two men who had the watch. He saw the state of the weather and feared something dreadful had happened, and then he took the watch upon himself, bravely lashing himself with a rope to the mast. The great waves dashed over the vessel, but still he remained faithful to his duty. Meanwhile the light burned bright and clear, and in spite of the fury of the storm flashed across the troubled waters, faithfully fulfilling its beneficent purpose.

Some stations are more comfortable than others; several of those at the mouth of the Thames are what the sailors would call tolerably snug berths; the Nore, for instance, is very much to be preferred to the Galloper, which is twenty-two miles off the Essex coast, or the Outer Dowsing off the Lincolnshire coast, which is still further out to sea. At every station with bad weather they have plenty of tossing about, but at the Galloper the sea always appears to be "lumpy"; a quick succession of nasty short waves keep the vessel in a continual state of jumping. At the Outer Dowsing they get the full benefit of the North Sea, and are very seldom quiet. Then there is the Seven Stones light-ship moored in forty fathoms water off the Scilly Islands. Here they experience unusually heavy seas; the vessel has to ride over great rollers from the Atlantic, which in rough weather run almost mountains high. The special dangers of this station have made it necessary that a crew of eighteen men should be attached to her, eleven of whom are always on board. She is also provided with an extra allowance of chain cable, and has been known to have out as much as three hundred fathoms so that she might ride safely over the gigantic waves.

The crews of the light-ships are occasionally honoured by visitors. The Trinity yacht, with some of the members of the Trinity Board, sometimes unexpectedly appears, and an inspection is made of the condition of the vessel. Woe to the officer in charge if any sign of neglect shows itself: the severe displeasure of the board will be visited on him. But, creditable alike to the vigilance of the members of the board and to the esprit de corps of the men in the service there is seldom occasion to find fault. Sometimes the lightmen have

to entertain shipwrecked crews, taking them in and giving them board and lodging until an opportunity occurs for sending them ashore. There is amongst our voyaging sailors a kindly sympathy for the lightsmen, and a just appreciation of the value of the light-ships to navigation, and in consequence captains of passing vessels will often go close to the light-ship, the sailors will shout out a friendly salutation and fling out a bundle of newspapers or some other equally acceptable offering for the benefit of the lightsmen. But the most remarkable visitors come on very dark and cloudy nights. It is then that belated birds who have flown out to sea and are unable to find their way back in the dark, are attracted by the ship's lights, and settle in hundreds on the rigging and about the ship. Some of the more thoughtless and rash, in their eager haste to reach the light, fly towards it with all their strength, and before they know where they are, come with great force against the lantern glass and fall stunned and often killed on the deck. Many people would be astonished to hear of the woodcocks, partridges, blackbirds, thrushes, &c., that are sometimes caught by the seamen of the light-vessels.

It is somewhat surprising that men can be readily found to man these ships. To be cooped up in a vessel of one hundred and fifty tons, which is chained to one position in a dreary waste of waters; to be subjected to all the perils of storms and tempests; to be continually pitched and flung about—all this would seem to make life a burden and a misery. But there are men who like to tumble through life, who delight in being tempest-tossed and storm-beaten, and who are quite willing to undergo the perils and hardships of life in a light-ship, provided they can earn a livelihood by it. Moreover, as a rule, these men are by no means intelligent, and therefore do not want any intellectual food; they are generally to be found in that state of mental vacuity which seems to be a not uncommon condition of mind at sea. But they are remarkable for the dogged bravery with which they will discharge their important duties, in spite of the wildest raging of the sea, or the most blustering fury of the wind.

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF JOHN ACKLAND.

A TRUE STORY.

IN THIRTEEN CHAPTERS. CHAPTER X.

MR. D'OILEY, the watchmaker, was a strange mixture of practical shrewdness and an inveterate appetite for the miraculous. Spiritualism had not then been invented. Otherwise Mr. D'Oiley would surely have been one of its most enthusiastic disciples. But on the subject of animal magnetism, electro-biology, presentiments, clairvoyance, and second sight, Mr. D'Oiley was great and terrible. The whole story of John Ack-

land, in all its details, had been discussed in every circle of Richmond society, high and low. Mr. D'Oiley was well up in it; and he had formed very decided opinions about it. He confided them to the wife of his bosom.

"Just look at the case without prejudice," said Mr. D'Oiley, in the confidence of the nuptial couch. "How does it stand, ma'am? It is well known that Cartwright owed Ackland a large sum of money. It is equally well known, ma'am, that Cartwright never had a large sum of money—of his own. How, then, did he get the money with which he says he paid off his debt to Ackland? There are only two ways, my dear, in which that man could have got that money. Either by a loan from some other person, to be repaid at the shortest possible date, or by a forgery. The first is not probable. The second is. In either case it would have been a matter of vital importance to Cartwright to regain possession of the money he paid to Ackland. In the one case, in order to liquidate the second loan on which he must have raised it; in the other case, to recover the forged draft before it fell due. The moment he had succeeded in securing Ackland's receipt for the money, he had nothing more to fear from Ackland. Why did Cartwright talk so much about his transactions with Ackland? Why did he show about Ackland's receipt for the money, if it were not to avert suspicion from himself after Ackland's disappearance, by making every one say, 'Cartwright could have had no motive to murder Ackland, for he owed him nothing'? Mark my words, Mrs. D. Time will show that John Ackland never left Virginia alive, and that he fell by the hand of Philip Cartwright."

"But in that case," objected Mrs. D., "why has the body never been found?"

"Time will show," replied Mr. D'Oiley, oracularly. "But you don't suppose that dead bodies are in the habit of walking about with their heads in their hands and showing themselves off, like waxworks? Eh?"

It is needless to say that both Mr. and Mrs. D. believed even more in Miss Simpson's magnetic gift than did Miss Simpson herself. That young lady, whenever the subject of John Ackland was referred to, assured her friends that she did not doubt she had talked a great deal of nonsense about Mr. Ackland, but she had not the least recollection of anything she might have said. This subject was inexpressibly distasteful to her, and she re-

quested that it might not be discussed in her presence. What was very extraordinary, and very much remarked, was the invincible repugnance which, ever since that day at Glenoak, Miss Simpson appeared to entertain towards Mr. Cartwright. She studiously avoided him, and if ever she happened, unavoidably, to find herself in the same room with him, or even to meet him in the street, it was noticed that she became visibly agitated, and turned away her eyes from him with an expression of horror. She either could not, or would not, give any explanation of this conduct, but gradually and imperceptibly Miss Simpson's studious avoidance of Mr. Cartwright affected the relations and intimate friends of this young lady, with an uncomfortable and unfavourable impression in regard to that gentleman. Nor did time, as it went by, improve either the fortunes, the character, or the reputation of Philip Cartwright. He neglected his property more than ever, and was constantly absent from Glenoak, haunting the hells, bars, and bowling-alleys of Richmond and all the neighbouring towns, apparently with no other purpose than to get rid of time disreputably. He drank fiercely, and the effects of habitual intoxication began to render his character so savage and sullen that in the course of a few years he entirely lost that personal popularity which he had formerly enjoyed.

Poor Virginia Cartwright had a sad and solitary life of it at Glenoak. Her father's affection for her was undiminished; nay, it seemed stronger than ever, but there was a fierceness and wildness about it which was rather terrible than soothing. And he himself had yet the grace to feel that he was no fit companion for his daughter. He was rarely with her, and, though numerous friends at Richmond and in the neighbourhood never ceased to urge her to visit them, and always received her with a sort of compassionate tenderness of manner, yet their kindness only wounded and embarrassed her. For Virginia Cartwright was sensitively proud, and proud even of her disreputable parent. So the poor young lady lived in great seclusion at Glenoak, of which she was undisputed mistress; and where, by her care and good sense, she contrived to prevent the property from altogether going to the dogs.

CHAPTER XI.

ONE afternoon in January (a bright clear frosty afternoon, when the ice was white on the James River), Miss Cartwright

ordered her pony carriage and drove herself over to Richmond. It was just six years since the date of John Ackland's visit to Glenoak, and Miss Cartwright was just sixteen years of age. Any one who saw her as she drove into Richmond that afternoon, with the glow in her dark Southern cheek heightened by the healthy cold, would have admitted that Virginia Cartwright had nobly fulfilled John Ackland's prophecies of her future beauty. People turned in the street to admire her as she passed. After visiting various stores where Miss Cartwright made various little purchases, the pony carriage stopped at the door of Mr. D'Oiley, the watchmaker, and Miss Cartwright alighting, left her watch with one of the shopmen to be cleaned and repaired, and returned to her by the postman, as soon as possible. Just as she was leaving the shop Mr. D'Oiley entered it from his back parlour.

"That is a very valuable chronometer of yours, miss," said Mr. D'Oiley, taking up the watch and examining it. "Not American make. No. I never saw but one watch like this in my life. May I ask, miss, where you purchased it?"

"I did not purchase it," said Virginia. "It was a gift, and I value it highly. Pray be careful of it, and return it to me as soon as you can." So saying, she left the shop.

Mr. D'Oiley screwed his microscope into his eye, opened Miss Cartwright's chronometer, and probed and examined it. Suddenly a gleam of triumphant intelligence illumined Mr. D'Oiley's features. Taking the watch with him he withdrew into the back parlour, and, carefully closing the door, took down from the shelf several volumes of old ledgers, which he examined carefully. At last Mr. D'Oiley found what he was looking for. "The Lord," exclaimed Mr. D'Oiley, "the Lord has delivered Philip Cartwright into mine hand!"

After nearly an hour's secret consultation with the wife of his bosom, Mr. D'Oiley then repaired to the house of Dr. Simpson, where he sought and obtained an interview with that gentleman.

"Dear me!" said Dr. Simpson. "What is the matter Mr. D'Oiley? You seem quite excited."

"I am excited, sir. This is a mighty serious matter, Dr. Simpson. And truly the ways of Providence are wonderful. Now, look at this watch. Did you ever see a watch like it before?"

"Not that I know of," said the doctor.

"I never did, sir, and I suppose I've seen as many watches as any man in these United States. Now, you follow me, Dr. Simpson. And keep your eyes, sir, on this re-markable watch that you see here in my hand. Six years ago that Mr. Ackland, who was your fellow-guest at Glenoak, called at my store, and asked me to clean this remarkable watch, and set it. I took particular notice of this remarkable watch, because it is a *most* re-markable watch, sir. And I took down the number of it in my books. I said to Mr. Ackland, when I handed his watch back to him, 'This is a very remarkable watch, sir.' 'Well, sir,' says he, 'it is a remarkable watch, but it loses time, sir.' 'It won't lose time now, sir,' says I; 'I'll warrant that watch of yours to go right for six years now that I've fixed it up,' said I. Well, sir, and the watch *has* gone right for six years. It's just six years and six months, Dr. Simpson, sir, since Mr. Ackland got this watch fixed up by me, and took it with him to Glenoak. And it's not six hours since Miss Cartwright called at my store, and brought me this very re-markable watch to fix up again."

"God bless my soul!" cried Dr. Simpson."

"You may well say that, Dr. Simpson, sir," responded Mr. D'Oiley. "I said to Miss Cartwright, 'May I make so bold, miss, as to ask where you happened to purchase this watch of yours?' 'Didn't purchase it,' says she, 'it was a gift,' and off she goes."

"But you don't mean to say——"

"I *do* mean to say it, sir. I mean to say that I don't believe Mr. Ackland would have given this very valuable chronometer to Virginia Cartwright who was a mere chit, when Mr. A. was at Glenoak. I mean to say, sir, that I *do* believe, and always *have* believed, and always *will* believe, that Mr. Ackland was foully murdered."

"Hush! hush!" exclaimed the doctor: "you have no right to say that, Mr. D'Oiley."

"But I *do* say it, sir," continued the watchmaker, energetically, "I *do* say it—to you at least, Dr. Simpson, sir. For I know that if you don't say it too, sir, you *think* it. And I know that Miss Simpson thinks it. And I say more, sir. I say that the man who gave this watch to Virginia Cartwright was a robber, as well as a murderer. That's what I say, sir."

"But you *mustn't* say it," said the doctor, "not unless you are prepared to——"

"Sir," said Mr. D'Oiley, "I am prepared to place this watch in the hands of justice."

"But you have no right to do anything of the kind. Justice will of course restore it to its present legal owner, Miss Cartwright. And let me tell you, Mr. D'Oiley, that this is a very delicate matter, in which any imprudence may easily bring you to trouble. Will you leave the watch—at least for a few days—in my hands? Miss Cartwright will doubtless be able to explain satisfactorily her possession of it. I will promise to see her immediately, and, if necessary, her father also. What do you say?"

Mr. D'Oiley would not consent to relinquish possession of the watch, which, as he again declared, "the Lord had delivered into his hands," but he reluctantly agreed to take no further steps in the matter until Dr. Simpson had seen Miss Cartwright. The doctor went to Glenoak next day and did see Miss Cartwright: from whom he learned that she had received the watch from her father as a birthday gift, on the occasion of her last birthday a year ago.

Where was her father? In Maysville, she believed. But it was nearly a month since she had heard from him. To Maysville went the doctor, and the first man he met at the bar of the Maysville hotel was Philip Cartwright. Cartwright was furious when he learned the object of the doctor's visit. "Of course," he said, "the watch had belonged to his poor friend John Ackland, who had given it to him as a parting gift, the very day on which he left Glenoak. And tell that scoundrel, D'Oiley," he added, "that if he don't immediately restore it to my daughter, I'll arrest him for a thief."

That gentleman, however, was neither disconcerted nor despondent.

"It is my conviction, sir," said he, "it has long been my conviction, sir, that I shall be guided by the finger of Providence to unravel this great mystery, and bring detection home to as black a criminal as ever burdened God's earth, sir. And since you tell me, Dr. Simpson, sir, that I have no help for it but to restore this watch to its unrightful owner, I shall take it back to Glenoak, and place it in Miss Cartwright's hands, myself."

CHAPTER XII.

MISS CARTWRIGHT thanked the watchmaker for taking so much care of her watch, and bringing it back to her, with—

his own hands. She begged that he would take some refreshment before leaving Glenoak, and remain there as long as he pleased. The weather was not very inviting; but if he liked to ride or walk in the plantation, Mr. Spinks, the overseer, would show him over it.

Mr. D'Oiley thanked Miss Cartwright for her kind condescension to "a poor overworked son of the busy city, miss." He was not much of an equestrian, and Mr. Cartwright's steeds had the reputation of being dangerous to bad riders, like himself. But there was nothing he liked so much as a good country walk on a fine frosty day; and, with Miss Cartwright's kind permission, he would gladly take a stroll about these beautiful premises before returning to town.

The first thing that roused Mr. D'Oiley's curiosity, when he commenced his stroll about the beautiful premises, was the shrieking of a miserable old negro who was wailing under the lash.

"What is the man's fault?" he inquired of the overseer who was standing by, to see that punishment was thoroughly inflicted.

"Man, you call him, do you?" responded Mr. Spinks, "I call him, sir, a darned pig-headed brute. We can't, none of us, get him to take that load of ice into the ice-house, and it's spoiling."

"Well, but," said Mr. D'Oiley, "the load seems a heavy one, and he don't look good for much."

"Good for much? He ain't good for anything."

"Why won't you take the ice, Sambo?" asked the watchmaker.

"I ain't Sambo," said the negro, sullenly and cowering, "I'm Ned, old Uncle Ned."

"Well, why won't you do as you're told, Uncle Ned?"

"'Cause poor old Ned he no dare, massa. Old Ned he no like Bogie in de ice-house. Bogie, he worse nor massa by night, and massa he worse nor Bogie by day. Poor Uncle Ned, he berry bad time of it."

Mr. D'Oiley had another illumination.

"Well now, you look here, Mr. Spinks. Reckon I'd like to buy that nigger o' you, sir. He ain't worth much, you know."

"Well, sir, he ain't bright. That's a fact. But there's a deal o' field work in him yet. And he was raised on the plantation, you see, and knows it well."

"Ah, indeed!" said the watchmaker, as though very much surprised to hear it.

"Knows it well, does he? Say a hundred dollars for him, Mr. Spinks?"

"Not two hundred, sir."

"Name your figure, sir."

"Not less than a thousand, Mr. D'Oiley. I assure you, sir, Mr. Cartwright wouldn't hear of it. He's uncommon fond of this nigger. He's quite a partiality for this nigger, has Mr. Cartwright, sir."

"Did you say a thousand, Mr. Spinks?"

"I did, sir."

"Split the difference, Mr. Spinks. Make it five hundred, sir."

"Done, sir."

"Done with you, sir," returned the watchmaker; "and if you'll take my cheque for it, I'll carry him back in my buggy. Nothing like settling things at once."

"Take your note of hand for a million, sir," responded the overseer, delighted to have sold a broken-down nigger so advantageously, at double the market price.

That very night the owner of Glenoak returned unexpectedly to his ancestral mansion. His first act was to send for Mr. Spinks. "I want to see Uncle Ned, Mr. Spinks. Send the brute up immediately."

"Uncle Ned? Why, Mr. Cartwright, I've just sold him, and very advantageously. He's not been worth his keep for the last three years."

Words cannot describe the frantic paroxysm of wrath into which Mr. Cartwright was thrown by this announcement.

"But, indeed, Mr. Cartwright," expostulated the overseer, "I thought that, in your interest, when I found Mr. D'Oiley willing to give five hundred——"

"You sold him to D'Oiley?"

"Yes, sir, this afternoon."

"You villain!" howled Cartwright, springing at the throat of the overseer. But his humour suddenly changed. "Never mind, now," he growled, flinging the overseer against the wall, "the mischief's done now. Order round the waggon and team this moment, and bring me all the money you have in the house, and then get out of my sight."

Mr. Cartwright strode up-stairs, and entered his daughter's room. "Virgy," he said, with a dim eye and a husky voice, "I'm going away—I'm going at once, and I'm going far, far, far. If you stay at Glenoak, Virgy, may-be we shan't meet again; anyhow not for a long, long while. If you'll come with me we'll never part, my girl; but the way's a long one, and the future's dark as night, and there's danger behind us. What will you do, Virgy?"

"O father, father!" cried the frightened girl, "how can you ask? I will never leave you!"

That night, Philip Cartwright and his daughter left Glenoak, never to return.

CHAPTER XIII.

It was about a fortnight after Glenoak had been deserted by its owners that the much-injured Mr. Spinks, whilst debating with himself the knotty question whether it were best to retain his situation, in the hope of further plunder, or to throw it up in vindication of his outraged dignity, was unpleasantly surprised by a second visit from Mr. D'Oiley, accompanied by Dr. Simpson, Judge Griffin, Mr. Inspector Tanin, and half a dozen constables.

"Now, Mr. Spinks," said Inspector Tanin, "you'll be good enough, if you please, sir, to set all hands on, to remove the ice out of that there ice-house of yours. I have a search-warrant, sir, to search these premises. And do you know what this is, Mr. Spinks? It's a warrant for the arrest of Philip S. Cartwright, whenever and wheresoever he can be found in the territory of the United States."

"On what charge?" asked Mr. Spinks.

"Murder," replied the inspector, laconically.

Mr. Spinks was persuaded. Mr. Cartwright's slaves were ordered to open Mr. Cartwright's ice-house and remove the ice.

Be it known to the reader that every country-house in America is provided with an excellent ice-house of the simplest and most practical kind. It consists of a deep excavation in the earth, roofed over with a pointed thatch. These ice-houses are always well filled in the winter, and rarely, if ever, quite emptied during the summer. It was long past dark before the men at work in the ice-house at Glenoak had removed all the loose ice from the pit. The lower layers were frozen as hard as granite, and could only be broken up by the pickaxe: so that the work went on slowly, by torch-light. At last Mr. Inspector, who had descended into the pit to superintend this final operation, called to those above for a stout rope. The rope was not immediately forthcoming; and when the submissive Spinks (who had been despatched to get one from the cart-house) returned with it in his hand the excitement of the spectators was intense. Uncle Ned, at his most urgent request, had been exempted from the ordeal of this expedition to Glenoak.

"Now pull!" cried Mr. Inspector from the bottom of the pit, "and pull gently."

The rope came up heavily. No wonder. There was a dead body fastened to the end of it. That dead body was the body of John Ackland. All present who had ever seen John Ackland recognised it at once, in despite of the lacerated skull and partially mangled features. For the ice had so wonderfully preserved the hideous secret confided to its frozen clasp, that the murdered man looked as freshly dead as if he had perished only an hour ago.

In the subsequent search of Glenoak a copy of John Ackland's letter to his cousin was found in Mr. Cartwright's desk. He had not taken the precaution of destroying it. Doubtless he had felt that if once the body of John Ackland were discovered at Glenoak, it little mattered what else was discovered there. And when he learned from his overseer that Uncle Ned had been sold to D'Oiley, he knew that he was a ruined man, and that his paramount concern was to place himself as quickly as possible beyond the reach of the law.

Mr. D'Oiley's triumph was great. He had worked hard for it. Never had he exercised so much ingenuity and patience as in the moral manipulation whereby he had finally elicited from Uncle Ned the revelations which had led to the discovery.

This was the substance of them: Philip Cartwright, whilst riding with his unfortunate guest through his own plantation, had slackened pace, and falling a little to the rear of his companion's horse, deliberately shot John Ackland through the back of the head. The wounded gentleman immediately fell from his saddle. Cartwright quietly alighted, and finding that there was still a faint flutter of life left in his victim, beat him about the head till he beat the life out of him with the butt-end of his gun. He then carefully examined the mare which Mr. Ackland had been riding, wiped every trace of blood from the saddle, turned it, and with a sharp cut of his whip started the beast into a gallop, in a direction away from the house. Thus left alone with the dead body, his next care was to dispose of it. All this happened in broad daylight, a good hour before sundown. Mr. Cartwright's own slaves were still at work in the surrounding fields. They must have heard the report of the firearm; they might possibly have witnessed the fall of the victim. But what of that? They were slaves. Philip Cartwright well knew that

in no American court of justice could a white man be convicted of crime on the evidence of a man of colour. He knew that none of his slaves could give evidence against him, even if they had witnessed every particular of his crime. He tied his own horse to a tree, and walked leisurely to the gate of the field. Leaning over it he perceived some of his own negroes at work in the adjoining ground; amongst them an old negro, whom he knew by experience that he could intimidate and cow, more easily even than the others. He beckoned this slave to him, and said coolly, as if it were the most natural announcement in the world, "I have just shot a man down; you must come along, Uncle Ned, and help me to carry the body into the ice-house." It was late in the summer season and the ice-house at Glenoak was nearly empty. Quite empty it never was. With some difficulty Cartwright and the slave removed the upper layer of ice, and buried the body underneath it. "And now look ye here," said Cartwright, "if ever you utter to a human being about what's in that ice-house, or what I've told you, or what you've just been doing, I'll flay you alive and roast you afterwards. All the same I won't have any talking, or hinting, or winking. Do you understand? If you don't teach your eyes to forget what they've seen, I'll gouge 'em out. If you don't teach your ears to forget what they've heard I'll cut 'em off. If you don't teach your tongue to be silent, I'll tear it out by the roots. So now you know what I mean. Get along with you." Before burying John Ackland's body, however, the murderer had rifled the dead man, and re-possessed himself of the forged notes which John Ackland (as Cartwright well knew) carried in the belt lent to him by Cartwright expressly for that purpose. Unluckily for Mr. Cartwright, while he was engaged in this operation his eye was tempted by what Mr. D'Oiley had called "that very re-markable watch, sir," and he hastily thrust John Ackland's chronometer into his own pocket. But for this superfluous felony, in all human probability Philip Cartwright would have carried

safely with him to his own grave the secret of his great crime.

The first question asked by the present writer of the Virginian gentleman from whom he received the details of this strange story was, "How did Philip Cartwright die?"

"Well, you see the law couldn't reach him in Texas, which wasn't then annexed. But John Ackland's cousin, and some of his friends in the North, and some down here in Virginia, constituted themselves a committee of vengeance. They were sworn to have Philip Cartwright's life, but to have it according to law. They found him in Texas, not far over the border, where he had set up a faro bank; and they disguised themselves, and they frequented the bank, and they played against him, and betted with him, till one night they succeeded in tempting him over the border, on the chance of plucking a fat pigeon there; but the officers of justice were waiting for him there; and by gad, sir, we arrested him, and tried him all square, and hanged him hard."

"And his daughter?"

"Poor girl, she didn't long survive her journey to Texas, and the rough life she had of it there. It was better for her. She was spared the knowledge of her father's guilt, and the humiliation of his death, and she loved the blackguard to the last."

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A Weekly Journal

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VERONICA.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE."
IN FIVE BOOKS.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER VI. CORRESPONDENCE.

THREE letters from abroad had come to the vicarage. Mr. Levincourt burnt them all, and said no word of them to any one.

One evening, when Mr. Plew returned from a round of professional visits, his mother put into his hand a large letter covered with foreign postmarks.

"Of course, Nathaniel," said the poor old woman, tremblingly watching his face, "I guess who it's from. But you would have nothing to say to her now, my deary, would you?"

"Mother!" gasped the little surgeon, clutching at the letter.

"There, there, Nathaniel, don't be angry with me, love. I have never said a wry word about the girl at home nor abroad; nor I don't want to. But—of course I know you are a grown man" (Mr. Plew was three-and-forty) "and can act for yourself; but you know, Nathaniel, love, I'm the mother that bore you, and in some ways you'll always be a child to me—aye, if you were a hundred! And it goes to my heart to see you badly treated by them that ain't worthy to— There, my deary, I've done."

Mr. Plew shut himself up in his little bed-room, and opened his letter.

His face, eager, anxious, all aglow with excitement, fell, and the light faded out of it. The bulky packet contained a sealed letter addressed to "Miss Maud Desmond." Within the outer envelope were written these words:

"I rely on you to convey the enclosed

into Maud's hands. I think you will not fail me. V."

Mr. Plew opened his shabby little writing-desk, took out a sheet of paper, wrapped the letter in it, sealed it, and directed it to Miss Desmond, No. 367, Gower-street, London.

Then he pressed the outer envelope to his lips, flushing a hot, painful crimson as he did so, and, finally, he sat down beside the bed, hid his face on the pillow, and cried.

The next day Maud received her letter. It ran as follows:

"I will begin with a warning. I warn you not to waste compassion and wallings and lamentations upon me. I desire, and need, no pity. I have chosen my fate, and the day may come, *will* come, when you will all acknowledge that I have chosen wisely. I have written to you once before, and twice to papa. Having received no answer, the idea occurred to me that papa had suppressed mine to you. I know the kind of twaddle—contamination, evil communications—must hold no parley with—I will not write the trash. It cannot apply to me. Believe that.

"It may be, on the other hand, that you *have* received my letter, and have chosen to make no sign. If it be so, so be it. But I give you this chance, by directing the present letter to the care of Mr. Plew. I believe him to be a faithful creature, and I hope that Sir John and myself may one day have it in our power to show him that we think so."

The words "Sir John and myself" made Maud recoil, when she read them, as though she had received a physical blow. The letter proceeded:

"You will, of course, be taught to think all evil of me. I know the paltry, envious

malice of a place like Shipley. How I loathe the name of it! And it is, no doubt, true that I caused papa some temporary anxiety. I trust it was brief. I left the letter on my toilette-table, and I conjectured that it could not long remain unseen. The letter, when once read, ought to have reassured him. Sir John gave me weighty reasons for not wishing to make our marriage public at once. I was bound to respect his secret. From the fact of papa having preserved an obstinate silence, I am led to guess that he is nourishing resentment against me. I shall be sorry if this be so, but can stoop to no more entreaties.

"The knowledge of the position I shall one day hold in the eyes of all the world sustains me against the idea of passing misconstruction.

"Sir John is all kindness and consideration to me. I am surrounded by all the elegant luxuries that wealth can purchase, or watchful affection suggest. I am travelling through exquisite scenery, and drawing near to my mother's native sunny land. I hate affectation of sentimentality, but, in truth, my heart beats faster as I look at the snowy peaks and think 'beyond there lies Italy!' Direct to me, Poste Restante, Arona, Lago Maggiore. Within a fortnight we shall be there. Your letter must be addressed to Lady Gale.

"Your affectionate (if you will let it be so)

VERONICA.

"Mandie, Mandie, tell me how papa is, how you are. Love me, Maudie.

"V."

The last few words were apparently added hurriedly. They were blurred and almost illegible. But Maud dwelt on them rather than on the rest of the letter. They showed that Veronica's heart was not dead, although her haughty spirit disdained sympathy or compassion.

Twice, thrice, four times, did Maud read the letter through her blinding tears, before she laid it down on her lap, and fairly thought over its contents.

One conviction stood out clear in her mind—either Veronica was deceived or deceiving.

That she could have no right to the title of "Lady Gale" they in England knew but too well. But was it equally certain that Veronica knew it? Was it not much more probable that Sir John was continuing to deceive her? Might he not even have gone through a false ceremony of marriage? Such things had been!

Maud pondered and pondered. Sadly she took a resolution. Come what might she would answer Veronica's letter. It could not be right to leave her in ignorance of the real facts of the case. She would write to Veronica, and would then enclose Veronica's letter to Mr. Levincourt, and tell him what she had done. He might be angry at first, but in his heart he would thank her. He could not really desire to abandon his only child to shame and misery. If Veronica could only know the truth she would leave that wicked man—she must!

Maud peeped into the drawing-room before sitting down to her little desk in her own room.

Lady Tallis was asleep on the sofa. She always slept regularly after her early dinner, and with equal regularity was always very much surprised when she awoke to find that she had "dropped off," as she phrased it.

Without allowing herself time to hesitate, Maud wrote a letter earnestly and affectionately conjuring the unfortunate girl to return to them, telling her, with simple directness, that Sir John Tallis Gale had a wife living, and who that wife was; imploring her to disbelieve any specious tale he might tell her, and to wrench herself away from him at any cost. "If you will only believe in the true love of your friends, dear Veronica," she wrote, "and come back to us, you shall never repent it."

Who the friends were whose love Veronica was conjured to believe in was not so clear. Maud secretly feared that Mr. Levincourt would be obdurate for a time. But he could not harden his heart against a repentant child for ever. Then she thought of the Sheardowns, and believed that they would be kind and charitable. They might assist Mr. Levincourt to leave Shipley, and to go elsewhere—to some place in which his daughter's story was not known. Fifty plans passed through Maud's brain, as her pen ran swiftly, eagerly over the paper. She wrote with all the eloquence she could.

Would Veronica be willing to return even when she knew the truth? Did she assuredly not know it already? On these questions Maud would not dwell, although they kept presenting themselves importunately to her mind. Her one plain, obvious duty was to tell Veronica the truth. How might not the lost girl one day reproach them all if they left her in

ignorance—if they did not stretch out a hand to rescue and reclaim her!

"I do love you, Veronica," she wrote at the end of her letter. "And so does Uncle Charles. You would not think him hard if you had seen him as I saw him on that dreadful day when we lost you. Oh, come back, come back to us! If you want means, or help, or protection, you *shall* have them, I swear that you shall! Write to me here. I am with my Aunt Hilda. She knows nothing of this letter, nor of yours to me. Do not let false shame or false pride keep you apart from us. Be strong. Oh look forward a little, dearest Veronica! Is not anything better than—but I know your heart is good; you will not let your father die without the consolation of knowing that you are safe, and that you have given up that wicked tempter so soon as you knew his real character. There is no disgrace in being deceived, and I know, I am *sure*, he has deceived you. Write to me, Veronica, soon, soon!"

The letter was sealed, directed (not without a pang of conscience at the written lie) to "Lady Gale," and despatched to the post office, at the same time with a few lines to Mr. Levincourt, enclosing Veronica's letter, begging him to read it, and telling him what she (Maud) had done.

To this latter epistle came an answer within a few days.

"I cannot be angry with you, my sweet child," wrote the vicar, "but I am grieved that you should have followed this impulse without consulting me. It is my duty, Maud, to guard you from contact with such as that wretched girl has made herself. The hardened audacity of her letter astounds me. If such things could be, I should believe that that fiend had cast a spell upon her. May God Almighty forgive her. I struggle with myself, but I am a broken man. I cannot hold up my head here. Blessed are the peace-makers, Maudie. You plead for her with sweet charity. But she has not injured you—she has injured no one as she has injured *me*. Still, I will not shut my mind against any ray of hope. It *may* be, as you say, that she has been deceived. If this be so, and she returns humbled and repentant—repentant for all the evil her treachery and deceit have heaped on *me*, we must crawl into some obscure corner and hide our shame together. At the best, she is branded and disgraced for life. But, my pure-

hearted Maud, I warn you not to be sanguine. Do not make sure that she will abandon her wicked luxuries, and pomps, and wealth, to live in decent, dull poverty with me. I can send no message to your aunt. My name must be loathsome in her ears. It were better for her and you to forget us altogether."

The tone of this letter was softer than Maud had dared to hope. Here, at least, he showed no stubborn wrath. It now remained to see what answer her letter to Arona would bring forth.

She waited eagerly, anxiously, fearfully, despondingly; but no answer ever came.

Her poor letter had been forwarded from Arona to Milan in accordance with the written instructions of Sir John Gale (he having changed his plans, and gone on to Milan sooner than had been arranged), had been opened by him, read by him, and burnt by him in the flame of a taper in his bedroom, until it was browner and more shrivelled than an autumn leaf.

CHAPTER VII. A FEW FRIENDS.

BEFORE the receipt of the letter from Italy Maud had promised to go to Mrs. Lovegrove's party.

She wished, after she had got the letter, to withdraw her promise. She was anxious, agitated, ill at ease. She dreaded meeting strangers. And although the women of Mr. Lovegrove's family had been kind and civil to her, they were not people whose society was at all congenial to her.

She had hitherto had no experience of town vulgarity. The poor peasants at Shipley were rough and ignorant. But that was different from the Cockney gentility which some of the Lovegroves assumed. The young man, Augustus, was peculiarly distasteful to her, from an instinctive knowledge she had that he admired herself, and would upon the slightest encouragement, or, she much feared, without any encouragement at all, avow as much in plain terms. She had yielded to her aunt's urgings, and had consented to go to Mrs. Lovegrove's party, however. But now she much desired to avoid doing so.

"My darling pet!" cried Lady Tallis, when Maud hinted this to her. "Now how can ye think of disappointing the poor woman? 'Twould be unkind, dear. And I have had that poplin turned, it looks beautiful by candle-light—but sure I wouldn't think of going without you, Maud dear."

"O yes, Aunt Hilda! Why not?"

"Not at all, child. I wouldn't dream of it. If you are not feeling well, or anything, we'll just stay at home the two of us. And I'll send a little note to Dr. Talbot."

"Dear aunt, I am quite well. I do not need any doctors."

"Then why in the world now wouldn't ye go to Mrs. Lovegrove's? I don't like to see you moping, a young creature like you. You want rousing a bit. And if you stick at home like an old woman, I shall be quite unhappy."

After this, Maud could no longer resist. She could not make her aunt understand that the party at Mrs. Lovegrove's could not by any possibility conduce to the raising of her spirits. "But if I am not feeling gay myself," thought Maud, "I will not be so selfish as to cast a damp on poor Aunt Hilda, when she is inclined to be cheerful. It would be cruel to stand in the way of any of her few enjoyments."

So the turned poplin was put on; and Lady Tallis yielded with some reluctance to the modest suggestion of Mrs. Lockwood, who was invited to superintend her ladyship's toilet, that a bow of tartan ribbon at the throat, scarcely harmonised with the pink ribbons in the cap.

"That soft rose-colour goes admirably with the grey poplin, Lady Tallis," said Zillah, quietly. "But, do you know, I am afraid the tartan bow will be a little—a little too conspicuous."

"Do you think so?" said my lady, taking it off with much docility, but with evident disappointment. "Well, to be sure, you have excellent taste. But when I was a girl I always used to be told that tartan went with anything. I remember dancing in a Caledonian quadrille at Delaney once, the time poor James came of age, and we had—myself and three other girls—white silk dresses, trimmed with the Royal Stuart tartan, and everybody said they looked lovely."

It took some time to get Lady Tallis dressed; for the ill fortune that attended her outer attire pursued all her garments. Buttons and strings dropped from her clothing like ripe apples from the tree. She would have riddled her clothes with pins, had not Mrs. Lockwood, neat and dexterous, stood by with a needle and thread ready to repair any damage.

"I think a few stitches are better than pins," observed Zillah. "Don't you, my lady?"

"O indeed I do! much better. But my

dear soul I am shocked to give ye this trouble. When I think that I had, and ought to have at this moment, attendants of my own to wait on me properly, and that I am now obliged to trespass on the kindness of my friends, I assure you I am ready to shed tears. But I won't give way, and spoil my dear Maud's pleasure. Don't ye think I am right in making her go out and enjoy herself?"

Despite the truth of Maud's assertions that she was ill at ease in spirit, and disinclined to go into the society of strangers, her curiosity and attention were aroused by the novelty of all she saw and heard at Mrs. Lovegrove's.

This was not like a Shipley tea-drinking with old Mrs. Plew, or a dinner-party at Mrs. Sheardown's or Lady Alicia Renwick's.

She desired and wished to sit still and unnoticed in a corner, and watch the company. But to her dismay, she found it to be Mrs. Lovegrove's intention to draw her into notice.

That lady, clad in a stiff metallic grey silk gown, drew Maud's arm through her own and walked with her, about the drawing-room, into the small room behind it, and even into the third room, a tiny closet above Mr. Frost's private office, where three old gentlemen and one old lady were playing whist at a green table, and glared at the intruders fiercely.

"I wish to make you known to the Dobbsses, dearest Miss Desmond," said Mrs. Lovegrove. "Those are the Misses Dobbs, in apple-green. I am so grieved that the General and Lady Dobbs cannot be here to-night. They are charming people. I know you would be delighted with them!"

Maud felt inwardly thankful that the charming Dobbsses were not present. She had no desire to form new acquaintances, and after a time she complained of feeling rather tired, and asked to be allowed to go and sit beside her aunt.

But when she reached Lady Tallis, she found Mr. Augustus Lovegrove, junior, seated close to her ladyship, and talking to her with much vivacity.

Mr. Augustus Lovegrove was very tall, and was awkward in his gait; and carried his head hanging backward, so that when he wore a hat, the hinder part of the brim rested on the collar of his coat; and sometimes sang comic songs to his own accompaniment on the pianoforte; and his friends considered him little inferior to Mr. John Parry. They allowed, indeed, that he had not "quite Parry's touch on the piano

But that was only a knack, you know." His mother called him an excellent son, and the Puseyite clergyman of the church he attended, pronounced him a model to all young men. His little bedroom at the top of the house was stuck over with paltry coloured lithographs of saints, and illuminated texts in Latin. It was rumoured among his sisters that he possessed a rosary which had been blessed by the Pope. He was being brought up to his father's calling, and Mr. Lovegrove, who knew what he was talking about, pronounced that Gussy had a very fair head for business; and that he understood that two and two make four, quite as well as most people.

"Here she is!" exclaimed Mr. Augustus, as Maud approached. "We were just talking about you, Miss Desmond, my lady and I."

The intimation was not altogether pleasing to Maud. She bowed with rather stiff politeness and sat down next to her aunt.

"I was just saying to my lady," proceeded the gallant Augustus, "that their painted hair has no chance beside yours. They can't get the shine, you know." And he slightly nodded his head in the direction of the Misses Dobbs' apple-green skirts, which were disappearing into the second drawing-room.

Maud felt disgusted, and made no reply.

Lady Tallis, however, raised her eyebrows and inquired with much interest, "Do you, now *do* you think that those young ladies dye their hair?"

"Not the least doubt of it, ma'am. I've known Polly Dobbs ever since I was a small boy. And when she was fifteen, her hair was as brown as a berry. They both came back from the Continent last year with orange-coloured locks. Their mother says it's climate that did it. It's the kind of 'climate' they sell in the Burlington Arcade at seven-and-six per bottle!"

"Really! You don't say so?" cried Lady Tallis, not more than half understanding him. "Well, I know that you can get the waters—almost any foreign waters—in stone bottles, imported. But of course when you talk of climate in bottles, you're joking."

At this moment, greatly to Maud's relief, for she began to find young Lovegrove intolerable, a duet for harp and piano was commenced: and there was enforced silence among the company.

The players were Miss Lovegrove and Miss Lucy Lovegrove. Miss Phoebe Love-

grove turned over the music for her sister at the harp; and Miss Dora Lovegrove did the same for the pianist. The piece was very long and not particularly well executed. But Maud was sorry when it came to a close, for whilst it continued she could remain quiet and look about her unmolested.

Her eyes were attracted in spite of herself to a magnificently beautiful woman sitting in a nonchalantly graceful posture on a sofa, on the opposite side of the room. She looked so different from all the other persons present, and seemed to regard them with such calm contempt, that Maud found herself wondering who she could be; how she came there; and above all, why having come, she should be uncivil enough to allow her face to express boredom so undisguisedly.

No sooner had the duet come to a close, than this beautiful lady rose, took the arm of a gentleman, and came across the drawing-room to where Lady Tallis and Maud were sitting.

The lady and gentleman were Mrs. and Mr. Frost. The latter bowed profoundly to Lady Tallis, and begged permission to present his wife to her.

"Most happy!—delighted!" said Lady Tallis, holding out her hand. She had seen Mr. Frost in Gower-street very often.

There was no difficulty in making my lady's acquaintance. She began to chat directly, with as much familiarity as though the Frosts had been known to her all her life.

Mrs. Frost appraised her ladyship's attire with a glance, of whose meaning Lady Tallis was happily unconscious.

Mr. Frost furtively watched Maud, and at length, during one of the rare pauses in Lady Tallis's flow of talk, said hesitatingly,—"Your niece, is is not?"

"Indeed and in truth she is my niece, Mr. Frost, and a great blessing and comfort it is to have her with me! Maud, my darling, this is Mrs. Frost. Mr. Frost, Miss Desmond."

Mr. Frost sat down beside the young lady and began to talk to her. He perceived at once that she was very different in every respect from her aunt. It was quite impossible to jump into terms of familiarity with Maud Desmond.

"You have been ill, I was sorry to learn," said Mr. Frost.

"I was a little ill: very slightly. I am quite well now, thank you."

"Perhaps London does not altogether

agree with you. You have been used to a country life, have you not?"

"I have lived nearly always in the country. But I am very well in London now."

"You are living in the house of a very old friend of mine, Mrs. Lockwood."

The change in Maud's face from apathy to interest, when he uttered the name, was not lost upon Mr. Frost.

"You are an old friend of Mrs. Lockwood's?" repeated Maud, smiling.

"A very old friend. I knew her husband before he was married. I have known Hugh ever since he was born. He is a right good fellow."

"Oh yes."

"But his mother is a little disturbed about him at present. He has taken an obstinate fit into his head, and wants to set up as an architect on his own account, instead of remaining longer in Digby and West's offices. Perhaps you have heard?"

"Yes; I heard something of it from Mrs. Lockwood; and from my friends Captain and Mrs. Sheardown."

"Ah, exactly."

"Captain Sheardown seemed to think that Mr. Lockwood was justified in his plan."

"I have no doubt that Captain Sheardown is an excellent gentleman."

"He is very good and very sensible."

"No doubt. Still on this point his opinion is scarcely the most valuable that could be had. I am going to Italy myself in a very short time—. You are looking pale. Is the heat of the room too much for you?"

"No, thank you. Yes—I am rather oppressed by it. You were saying—"

"That I am going to Italy on business which, if carried out successfully, would enable me to throw an excellent thing in Hugh Lockwood's way. It might keep him abroad for a year or two, but that would be no disadvantage—on the contrary. If we can only persuade Hugh not to be in a hurry to assume responsibilities on his own account."

"The carriage *must* be here by this time, Sidney," said Mrs. Frost rising and touching her husband's shoulder. "Do inquire!"

"Not going yet, surely!" exclaimed Mrs. Lovegrove with stern distinctness. "Not going before partaking of our humble refreshments?"

"O thank you very much," returned Mrs. Frost, "but I really couldn't eat anything. We rushed away from dinner in

order to get here before it was all over. Your hours are so virtuously early!"

It was perhaps strange that Mrs. Lovegrove should feel offended at being told that she kept virtuously early hours. But the fact was that she did so feel.

"I saw," said the hostess, "that you had scraped acquaintance with my friend Lady Tallis Gale. I would have presented you to her, but the fact is, she does not particularly care for making acquaintance out of her own set."

"Oh, that talkative elderly lady in the turned gown? Yes; Sidney presented me to her. What an odd person!"

"In her peculiar and painful position," pursued Mrs. Lovegrove, loftily, "Mr. Lovegrove does not feel justified in intruding strangers on her acquaintance."

"What's the matter with her? Is she not quite right in her head?" asked Mrs. Frost, slightly touching her own forehead as she spoke.

This was too much for Mrs. Lovegrove. She had felt that she was getting the worst of it throughout; for she was piqued, and Mrs. Frost was genuinely cool and unconcerned.

"I don't understand you, Mrs. Frost," said Mrs. Lovegrove, "nor can I conjecture why you should wish to—to—insult my friends."

"O dear me, I assure you I hadn't the least idea of insulting the poor woman," rejoined Mrs. Frost, imperturbably. "It would be her misfortune, not her fault, you know, after all! But you said something, yourself, about her peculiar and painful position."

Mrs. Lovegrove faced round solemnly. "I did so, Mrs. Frost," she said. "And poor dear Lady Tallis's position is indeed a sad one. Her husband—a man of enormous wealth, but of so profligate a character that I shudder to breathe his name in the same atmosphere where my daughters are—her husband," continued Mrs. Lovegrove, reaching a climax of impressiveness, and lowering her voice almost to a whisper, "*has gone off and deserted her!*"

"Really? Very shocking! But," added Mrs. Frost, "do you know, I think *not*, on the whole, very surprising!"

That night, in the seclusion of their chamber, Mrs. Lovegrove informed her husband that, come what might, she would never, on any consideration, invite "that woman"—so she designated Mrs. Frost—inside her doors again.

"Pooh, Sarah!" said Mr. Lovegrove, "why not?"

"Why not, Augustus? I wonder that you can ask! Her insolence and airs are beyond bearing. And did you see her gown?"

"A black gown, wasn't it? It looked very neat, I thought."

"Very neat! If three guineas a yard paid for that lace it was trimmed with, I will undertake to eat it. That is all, Augustus!"

But yet that proved to be not quite all. And Mr. Lovegrove had to listen to a long catalogue of Mrs. Frost's misdemeanours until he fell asleep.

Mrs. Frost, on her side, declared that she had been bored to death; that she had never seen anything like the collection of creatures Mrs. Lovegrove had gathered together; that they had stared at her (Mrs. Frost) as though she were a savage; and, finally, she asked her husband what good had been done by her going there at all, seeing that that absurd woman, Mrs. Lovegrove, had chosen to take offence, and walk away from her in a huff!

"No good at all, Georgina, certainly, unless you had chosen to behave with civility, when you knew how I had begged you to do so."

"Really, I was perfectly civil. But Mrs. Lovegrove tried to quarrel with me because I was not overwhelmed by the honour and glory of being introduced to that ridiculous old Irishwoman."

"Lady Tallis's niece is, at all events, a very charming creature."

"The golden-haired girl in white? Well—yes—perhaps; I did not speak to her. Certainly she did look different from the rest of the menagerie. Those apple-green creatures! Ugh! They set one's teeth on edge!"

"You must call on Lady Tallis, Georgina. I want you to invite the girl, and take her into society a little."

"I? Thanks! I really cannot undertake to chaperon all your clients' daughters and nieces and cousins, and Heaven knows who besides."

"Lady Tallis Gale is no client of mine."

"Why do you trouble yourself about her, then?"

"Georgy, listen: this is a case in which your woman's tact might help me, if you would employ it on my behalf. There is some foolish love-making going on between Hugh Lockwood and this Miss Desmond. The girl is very different from what I ex-

pected. She is very attractive. Now, it is very undesirable that young Lockwood should entangle himself in an engagement just now."

"Very undesirable for whom?" asked Mrs. Frost, yawning behind her fan.

"For—for his mother."

"Really? Well, I should suppose that very trenchant little person with the prominent jaw, was able to manage her own business. I am sorry I cannot get up any vital interest in the case. But you know Mrs. Lockwood is not a dear old friend of mine!"

Mrs. Frost had for a brief time been really a little jealous of Zillah. And she still affected to be so whenever it suited her, although she felt tolerably certain that whatever were the strong tie of intimacy between her husband and Mrs. Lockwood, there was no echo in it of an old love story.

"Suppose I tell you, Georgina," said Mr. Frost, suppressing the hot words of anger which rose to his lips, "that it would be undesirable for me that Hugh Lockwood should engage himself at present."

"What in the world can it matter to you, Sidney?"

"There are business complications in the affair," said Mr. Frost, slowly. "But so long as these young folks are living in the same house and meeting daily, and so long as the young lady is mewed up there without any other society, it is in the course of nature that she should be disposed to fancy herself in love with Hugh. As to him, I am not surprised. The girl is full of sense and sweetness, and is a thorough gentlewoman. But Hugh ought to marry some one with a few thousands of her own. Miss Desmond is very poor. Now, if you would give her some pleasant society, and let her see something of the world, there would be less fear of Hugh and her making fools of themselves."

"Why don't you tell all that to Lady What's-her-name?" asked Mrs. Frost, leaning back in the carriage with closed eyes. "She is the proper person to look after her niece."

"I tell it to you because I choose that you shall obey me!" thundered Mr. Frost, furiously. "It is not enough that you drive me half wild by your extravagance; that you have neither common gratitude nor common consideration for your husband; but you thwart me at every turn. You deliberately put yourself in opposition to every plan or wish of mine. You disgust by your arrogance the people whom it is my special in-

terest to be on good terms with ; and you seek the company of fashionable fools who teach you to squander my money and despise my friends. Take care, Georgina ! I warn you to take care ! There are limits even to my indulgence."

Mr. Frost had uttered the last words in his heat, after the carriage had drawn up at his own door. And the words had been heard by the servant who opened it.

Mrs. Frost was mortified. She even shed a few tears. But her husband's wrath was flaming too high to be extinguished by a few tears at that moment.

"That is all I get," said Mrs. Frost to herself, as her maid was brushing out her hair, "for consenting to go near that odious Bedford-square set at all ! I was a fool to consent. I don't believe a word about its being important to Sidney whether Hugh Lockwood marries a princess or a pauper. It is merely to carry out some scheme of that artful little creature Mrs. Lockwood. But she shall find that whatever her influence over my husband may be, she cannot make *me* an accomplice in her plots."

SEA-SIDE STEREOSCOPES.

A CHEERY hopeful horn, a restless and merry violin, a deep-voiced mellow bass viol, and a flute that whistles like a jolly blackbird welcome me to Scarcliff, the night of my arrival at Lowther's. I look out from my lofty window at Scarcliff Bay, which shines like fluid silver in the moonlight, while half a dozen herring-boats, each with a speck of light hung like a talisman somewhere about it, ride at anchor sleepily on the bright placid wave. The open ring of lamps on the esplanade circles the southern cliff like an outspread necklace of gold, while the double rows of lights on the Spa Terrace form a sort of centre pendant.

Hark ! 'twas the Indian drum ! What means that noise, as of showmen perpetually going to begin ? Am I in Benares ? Is this Jubelpore or Sulipatam, and are the festivals commencing in the Hindoo temples, by order of Kehama the accursed ? O dear no ! That is only Mouter's private-hotel gong calling the Mouter world to tea, and that brazen bray that replies to it defiantly is Crowther's, lower down, resolved to also advertise her meals and the crowded state of her apartments, which, full or not, are equally kept lit up at night, on the principle that fires are kept burning in a camp the night it is deserted. Crowther's people despise Mouter's because "Private hotel and boarding-house" is painted in vulgar, staring, large gilt letters over Mouter's first-floor windows ; and Mouter's people do not *think* much of Crowther's, because they have *no seats of their own* in the terrace garden,

and, what is more despicable, have no croquet-ground. Moreover, Madre Mouter is musical, and so are the Miss Mouters, especially Louisa, the blonde, the second, who wears a blue snood and a blue "suivez-moi, jeunes hommes," that flutters in the evening breeze as, at the piano, by the open window, she nightly sings, surrounded by admirers, till the Crowther set, who only venture on Tommy Dodd and such low comic tunes, almost burst with envy.

Out on the north cliff to look at the grey pile of castle ruin rising on the hill, old and shattered, but still invincible and defiant. The moon is just now hidden by a cloud, and one star only shines above. Look below, at the very edge of the wet sand, just where the foam is receding, there stands a white lady, a pale phantom figure, like a ghost on the shore, waiting fixedly for some phantom ship. No, it is only the reflection of that lone star on the wet sand. Well, we have seen many worse ghosts than that. Lo ! a bicycle ; a tall-legged person is standing over it on tiptoe—misguided man. The moment he puts his feet on the wheel supports away he is borne—a self-tormented Mazeppa. On he rolls and over he topples time after time, until at last two friends hold him ignominiously on, one on each side, a volunteer pushes him contemptuously behind, and he is conveyed home, for this time, without the broken leg he seems so ardently to covet. Those two lovers, on the seat looking seaward, with their faces so near together, do not turn to see his ignominious retreat, and probably would not look round if half Scarcliff were to suddenly blaze up like a vesuvian.

Awake early I thrust my head out of the open window at Lowther's, to see if the coast is where it was. Queen Ocean has three deep lace flounces of foam to her gown. The ruined castle is veiled in a sunny mist. One sail is a reddish yellow in the sunshine ; beyond scatter other sails, growing to mere specks, greyer and speckier as they recede more and more towards Flamborough Head. What are those dark spots like black corks, washing about down there in the spray ? Those are the hardy bathers of Scarcliff. All the amusements are already mustered on the parade ; the Hindoo with tracts ; the blind beggar, whose unsympathising dog holds in his mouth a tin for pence ; the blue-coated, tow-haired, frowy German band ; the boy with fuses and the Scarcliff Gazette done up in pink wrappers ; the garrulous old Italian with a big nose that quivers when he walks, and the monkey in a plaid tunic that plays the tambourine. I get up and find Crowther's set are watching with dignity the little caricature of man gnawing at an apple, while Mouter's people, in their noisy, vulgar way, are preparing a handful of nuts to throw him when he comes to their steps. The proprietor of the performing birds is making slowly towards us, and I hear the pop of the little gun that announces the execution of that old offender the deserter. Down below in the foam a fat man is out wading breast high in the green water

like a Polyphemus pursuing Acis, while along the shore the bathing-machine proprietor dashes to and fro on his pony as if perpetually rushing off for the lifeboat. A large concourse on the pier head watch with interest the fat struggler with the elements, while a resolute angler is fishing stolidly for haddock, as if he was never to have a meal unless he drew it from the sea.

There is one quiet amusement always in fashion at Scarciff. In fact, it is not so much the custom as the religion of this and other sea-side places. You sit down facing the sea, and look steadily seaward till you get giddy and sleepy; you then walk long enough to clear yourself from this feeling, and then sit down and stare vacantly again. Red-faced farmers, bilious business men, pink school-girls, yellow old country-women in poke bonnets, and young dandies—every one does it. Most of these contemplators must exhaust the sea (mentally I mean) in three minutes. They observe it is blue, level, with sunny gleams upon it here and there, while some white-winged gulls flicker over it like large white butterflies; they know that it has illimitable power of getting angry, and in its wrath of devouring men, and there they end, but still magnetised by its irresistible fascination, they sit there day after day as if they were trying to write something to cut out Byron's Address to the Ocean. The custom may tend slightly to idiocy, but in other respects it is a rational and healthy custom enough.

As I walk round by the castle cliff, where the big gun from Sebastopol is, I find an old lame fisherman leaning there and gazing wistfully seaward. I ask him if that is a collier out yonder. He says yes, with an air of surprise at any landsman knowing a collier so far off. I explain to him I mean the vessel out there by the pier (five miles nearer than where he means). He shifts his quid grimly and scornfully, at this. He meant that speck out ever so far. I try, but I can't see it at all, and go down to zero at once in my own estimation. I ask my mariner (to carry the thing off), if it is a good day for fishing. Never was a better, he says: would I like his boat? He's got plenty of bait ready. The day was fine, with a little white feather on the sea, the breakers were crashing along the shore. It might be a good day for a strong constitution, but not for me. Since that I have had reason to suspect it was not so good a day, for the day after I asked the same question. The wind was then furious, raging, demoniacally spiteful in the matter of chimney-pot hats. I was then also informed it was a first-rate day, and safe for mackerel. A third day it rained violently. Even that day, too, was pronounced perfect. Now, as they could not all be perfect, I am inclined to think that not one of them was, and that if Youth had been at the prow, Nausea would certainly have been at the helm. Look! There are Mouter's set going out now, all in yachting dress; it's a show off Crowther's people say, and they always

come back ill. Do you hear that crash? That is thunder. The Mouters will just have got comfortably out at sea. Serve them right, growls Crowther, who is what his friends call a plain sort of man; but though I esteem him, I must confess that, for my own part, I set him down as decidedly ugly.

Bathing! There again, those Mouter people, who break every law human and divine, troop off smirking and philandering almost directly after breakfast, when everybody knows it is as much as one's life is worth to bathe within two hours of a meal. Every one at Crowther's expects that some day the whole Mouter lot will go off in simultaneous apoplexy. They dabble and shiver about, but I'll just give you an idea of how they suffer. The other day I went to bathe and had to wait till an invisible gentleman in No. 32 had done dressing. I waited for an endless time; at last the bathing man says, "I think I'd knock, sir," so I did, and a feeble, wavering voice answered, "In a moment." Presently the door slowly opened, and a blue shivering jelly of a woe-begone man, looking the image of alarm and nervousness, stammeringly articulated, "Would you be kind enough to button my braces, sir; my hands are so benumbed, I've been half an hour trying to do them." I saw that man afterwards on the Terrace slinking home to Mouter's. He was never his own man again, and after all he went off (just like Mouter's people) without paying for his last six bathing tickets. Now improper bathing may benumb a man, but it doesn't, you know, make a man forget to pay for his bathing tickets.

The Crowther set are jolly, hearty, honest, rather vulgar people. They dress any how, and dispute a good deal about cloth and iron, praise Hoodersfield and Braaardford, and hate fuss, sham, and pretension. Their wives are generally rather full-faced, hard, sturdy women, who speak their minds; and their daughters are hearty, pretty, strong, good-natured girls, who laugh loud and sing loud, and walk fast and far, and delight in boating, and do not try to conceal their likes and dislikes. They are not afraid to show they enjoy themselves, they are fresh and natural, and have no affectation. The Crowther men are very hearty and sociable, and are, as a rule, generally meeting friends from "Hool," wherever you go with them.

What a stupendous fool I am! Here I have been afraid to bathe for a whole week because of the cold, and I declare if the water isn't delightfully fresh, and without a sting.

"Always is warm, sir, after the night's been rough," says the machine proprietor.

I long to know the scientific reason for this phenomenon, but like a fool again I am ashamed to ask, so I say, "I suppose so," which veils my ignorance. I presume the sea beats itself warm just as a cabman warms his hands by striking himself on the chest, and yet that hardly seems to bring one much nearer to an adequate explanation.

On coming out I try to educe from the bathing-machine man principles to guide me in bathing. His rule is simple and comprehensive.

"What I always say, sir, is, in and out again."

This principle, thought I, has at least one good point about it, it makes a bathing-machine useful to as many people as possible in a morning. As I jump down the steps of the bathing-machine and dance on the shore for sheer joy and redundancy of animal life, the sand is blowing over the beach like a flowing river, and the sand-hills below the cliffs are all a smoke with eddies of restless atoms. Great broad dark-brown ribbons of glue-coloured sea-weed are washing to land, a pallid little crab is vainly trying to work home to his parish to secure a settlement, and a flabby star-fish, stranded half an hour ago, moves one of his rays in feeble appeal to me, as I pass recklessly by, denouncing aloud the blatant humbug of Moulder's gong that is thundering out from the cliff-top the summons to an indifferent and pretentious dinner.

An evening stereoscope. A Scarcliff evening is full of pleasant contrasts. The bay glows like silver, and the headlands are steeped in a blue moonlit mist that bathes also the whole bluff shoulder of the Castle Hill. The moon a moment ago had a great black-winged cloud stretching right athwart it like a dusky eagle. Then the eagle faded and the cloud thinned and thinned till it turned a mother-of-pearl colour, amber in parts. Presently all these hues dissolve, and the great, full, bright moon launches out into an ocean of cloudless blue. The lamps on the North Pier are lighting, two by two, and casting golden hues and dark shadows on the sands below. Wafts of music arise from the southern bay, for there is to be a fête to-night, and the Spa Terrace gleams already in golden lines like a miniature Naples. There are crowds of tremendously dressed persons at the door of the Domdaniel Hotel on the south side; they are all going to the fête. Ha! now they begin: there streams up a rocket high over the dark green woods that slope back from the sea. It bursts over the sea in clusters of crimson and emerald fire, as if in mockery of the moon, that is looking down with such clear and steadfast eye, all the cold pride of Diana in her gaze at our transient follies, and little, fantastic pleasures. The gay crowd chatters and paces; presently a fitful explosion breaks out everywhere: it is the set piece. "Good-night" appears in a thousand colours, the band crashes out God save the Queen, and the gala is over.

The lights on the pier go out one by one, the waves race underneath and foam against the iron stilt-like legs of the pier, as much as to say, "Some day or another when we are really hungry, we'll just make a mouthful of you young fellows." The windows in the crescent fade out fast. The sharp gas-lights look lonely now. The sea plunges and roars as I go to sleep, further and further now, to

a whisper—to nothing—for I have descended far from it into Dreamland.

A morning stereoscope at Scarcliff. The cliff is all alive—children everywhere—rosy, plump, merry children, equipped with wooden spades, and pails, and landing nets. People are descending in great numbers the rude stairs that lead down to the sands. The green-roofed bathing machines are wading in the sea, and several young ladies dressed as Banshees, and with cascades of golden hair, are splashing each other and laughing; those pink spots out there are men swimming. There is a pretty sight: a stalwart father, with the chest of Hercules, has got his little curly-headed boy on his shoulders, and they both are laughing and shouting in boisterous enjoyment of the fun. Now the father is resting him on that great, wallowing, green buoy, and the urchin is screaming, half in fun, half in real alarm. That little blue-striped hut on the cliff is doing a brisk business in pails, but no one buys the old tattered copies of the *Whole Duty of Man* and *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*, or those cornelians that are kept in pudding basins like so many plums.

See the herring boats coming in, a pleasant and lively sight, for the sky to seaward, seen from this great breakwater of Cyclopean stones, is always full of breezy Vandervelde effects, and is delicious in its fine sunny atmosphere and its great grey clouds, shifting to all colours, from white to rose and from purple to amber. It has been a rough night, and the decks of the herring boats are sodden-salt with spray and speckled with silvery scales. The rugged-bearded men have their shiny-yellow sou'-westers pulled down over their brows, and their yellow waterproofs come down as far as their great greasy boots, so that the Deluge itself would be a mere trifle to them. Rough lads thrust their heads up the hatchways, and lift out brimming baskets of fish. Yes, they did pull them in last night pretty tidy. The quay is covered with herrings, and men are measuring them off in baskets, and mixing them with coarse salt as they measure them. The great, dark sails are lowering as every moment boats come round the lighthouse corner with shouting crews. In an hour cart-loads of red-brown nets will be stretching to dry in the green fields outside Scarcliff; nothing about the busy scene do I more like than to see the little fishermen's boys—sou'-westers, jersey, boots, the very miniature of their fathers—pulling at tow ropes, or, with great self-importance, carrying nets ashore. In them the baby and the hero are combined; the urchin, only just released from his mother's arms, has learned already to look death smilingly in the face, to despise storms, to laugh at reefs, and to treat the waves as if they were mere flocks of patient sheep. Look at that youngster now, kneeling on the stern of a boat that is rocking in the surf, while his brother, a year younger, stands up to his knees in the mud in the back harbour pulling at a small anchor. They're chips of the good

old block, and you should see how neat and handy they are in a gale of wind.

What have we done? A curse of lady-birds is upon us. Everything is studded with the little flying tortoise with the orange shell and the black spots. They crawl about the scorched white wild barley on the edge of the cliff, and they nestle in the thistle-down. They survey the fences and emboss the walls. Where do they hail from? What is their little game at Scarcliff? Where were they before they came here? I just now met four coming up to our front door at Lowther's as if they were going to leave their cards, and I see that little brute of a page boy in plum colour at Moulder's scrunch hundreds a day as he runs his errands.

What a morning! The sea looks as if it could not drown a baby. The only sound is the sleepy simmering of the surf on the shore as the ebbing water leaves its thread of foam upon the sand. The waves are frothing against the black boulders at the Castle foot, and miles away yonder I see the waves leaping up like a pack of restless white deer-hounds round Filey Brigg. A distant lamp on the Terrace sparkles like a diamond, and the board with the touching appeal, "Don't leave Scarcliff without seeing the camera!" flaps protestingly against the rails to which it is tied. The whole long line of sea-side houses is all in shadow, except one house that catches the eastern sun from a side street.

Ba-room!—a shock of thunder makes all Scarcliff stagger again, and long, deep echoes roll away seaward. That is a cannon: the artillerymen on the castle are practising at a floating mark. Number One, sponge; Number Two, load—and so on. Ba-room! bellows the gun again, with very tolerable activity. One would think the old line of walls—so often invested in old times—was once more beleaguered; but those shattered towers are helpless now, and laughing at his work, Time, in likeness of a Yorkshire urchin, sits on the broken battlements and watches the gun practice. I go in at a gate leading to the castle which is hung with toy boats, and is guarded by a lame sailor; a red flag waves above from the edge of the northward cliff. Young fellows in scarlet tunics, by twos and threes, come striding up to the castle-hill with rifles on their shoulders; they are Scarcliff riflemen going to shoot for prizes. I find two batches of alert scarlet men drawn up outside a tent in the broad meadow above the castle. There are two targets between high turf walls. Two of the men are out on the edge of the cliff behind the tent firing down at a bit of floating wreck. The volunteers are fine stalwart, grave, resolute fellows, intent on the prizes. A jolly fellow, with big sandy beard, and in plain dress, is seated in a chair with a telescope before him to watch the targets. A bugle sounds. Hythe position at three hundred yards, every bullet on, and blue and red-and-white flags up every moment. The bull's-eyes sound full and clear; the outside shots give a slighter tang. The prize is all with a quiet brown-looking

fellow, who fires carefully and without hurry, waiting for lulls of the wind. Some young sisters of volunteers, sent to bring their dinners, look on with wonder and delight, as David did when he was sent to the Israelitish camp and culled the pebbles by the way. A red and white flag—a bull's-eye. Hurrah! the steady brown man has won the cup with a good score of fifty-nine.

The tradesmen at Scarcliff are not smooth-tongued; they are too rich for that. No, they are blunt, sturdy Yorkshire people, who quietly let you know they don't care whether you deal with them or not. Yet for all that they do not despise the small arts of trade, and your second pound of tea, and your second joint, and your second couple of fowls, are not, as a rule, by any means so good as the first. They remind me of the people on a wild hill outside Monmouth, who in summer when you ask where they come from, say boldly and rather defiantly, "Why, from Penallt," with a devil-may-care air sure enough; but in winter and snow-time if you ask them, they reply with a deprecating shudder, "Oh, from Penallt, God bless us!" A month or two more, and you might fire a seventy-four-pounder up and down Scarcliff without hitting a visitor. The Scarcliff shopocracy will be humble enough then, I warrant, and they'd send you a pound of sugar twenty miles, I very strongly conjecture.

Sunday is a characteristic day at Scarcliff. Go, just as the churches "come out," and see how in the High-street the cross-currents of Ritualists, Congregationalists, Wesleyans, Primitive Christians, Roman Catholics, &c., ebb and flow through the little gate they call the Bar. And through the midst of the gaily-dressed people, the rich manufacturers, the simple country people in for the day, and the chattering servants, stride to and fro (as if for ever condemned to pace a real or imaginary quarter-deck), the fishermen, broad-chested rugged fellows, in the eternal blue guernsey—the Norseman's shirt of mail softened and civilised at last into harmless woollen, but still covering bold, brave hearts. Like pirates on shore, they seem to walk defiantly, eyeing the degenerate tourists around them, and ready at a shrill boatswain's whistle to sack the whole town, and sail away with the Sabine women to the "golden South Amerikies."

It is difficult, when the calm waves are breaking in music on the shore, to reflect on Scarcliff having any dangers; but it has. How many a Scarcliff boat Death in his black coffin-bark has hailed! One out of every three poor women you meet would tell you she had lost a brother or a son or a husband by drowning. Some years ago a party were caught by the tide on the sands near Filey, and nearly all drowned. Those cliffs, too, that look so calm in the sun, have had their countless victims. Only last week, two boys, out for a scramble over the Holmes under the castle before breakfast, scaled the cliff to get home the sooner. One boy got up safely, and hearing a cry looked back. His friend hung half-

way up, unable to move, clinging at some grass, and benumbed with fear. The first lad ran to the artillerymen's barracks for a rope. When he came back the younger boy was gone. They searched and found his crushed body between some rocks on the shore.

The Scarcliff fishermen are fine fellows, but I fear they are given to fiction. I heard one the other day talking to two of Moulder's young gentlemen about gunnery. They were leaning against the big Russian gun on the north cliff. The mariner was discoursing on a certain revolving cannon lately invented, and he ended by assuring his young friends that the longest distance he had ever known a shell thrown was *five-and-thirty miles, but then that was a peculiar case*. The other day I fell into conversation with a long-limbed old pilot who was on the watch on the cliff for a certain schooner loaded with slates, that he and his mate had heard of the night before when they were laying their lobster-pots out there yonder beyond that second point where the sea was running so high. No, there was no waiting for turns with the pilots at Scarcliff, if he could only just set eyes on the schooner he'd be off with his boat in a jiffy. He'd been out till two o'clock with the lobster-pots and only got two lobsters. It was owing, he thought, to the Northern Lights, and heavy they was all night, dancing and capering, and the sky all in a flame wi'em, wonderful for them as had never seen it. Those lights didn't bode no good just about the Equinox. Yesterday the sun crossed the line, about meridian, and the Northern Lights, coming after, boded bad weather. Did I see that Whitby steamer down there trying to get to the pier for passengers? She'd better take care what she was after or she'd get aground. It was a burning shame she wasn't obliged to take a pilot. Yes, she'd lost her way in the fog near Whitby several times, and she'd do it once too often. You better get off, my gentleman. That pier was not well built and would go some winter. It was caulked, there was no ventilation in it, wind and water must have vent, and when a heavy sea came under it, it would lift off all the planking and play old Harry with it. No, he had never been in the Baltic, but he had been off Cape Horn three weeks trying to get round by Patagonia and Terra-fuegar. That was with Captain Bell of Whitby, and then he proposed to try the Straits of Magellan, as ain't barely navigable. Three hundred miles long they was, and a ugly shop to be in, sure enough. Shore at the Horn was rocks tremendous high. What vessel was that? only a light collier. What cargo was the most dangerous? Well, copper ore; linseed was bad too, it shifted so; coals was good, a vessel was always lively with coals, and timber wasn't bad; but it was all screw colliers now, they went home with water for ballast, and got it pumped out with a donkey engine directly they arrived at Shields. I hadn't got the price of half an ounce of 'baccy about me, had I?

I am almost afraid the fellow was a humbug, and that the schooner for which he was looking out was the Flying Dutchman or some such sha-

dowy craft; for the next day I met had forgotten me, and began talking "track" that a parson had just given him pretty reading it was, and uncommon weather it was to be sure. He was n communicative about the schooner, but thou must have "blown away" in the night luck, for he hadn't the price of a 'baccy in his pocket.

The outdoor sights at Scarcliff are so especially characteristic. The other d side street I came upon a truck drawn b sailors. An artful-looking man in a nought was the spokesman, and his a was a little, fair, podgy man in a blue who held in his hand a cigar box with the lid ready for contributions. On th lay a huge blubbery fish, about ten fee with a small head and a vacant eye. A c nursemaids, children in buff shoes, and v ing excursionists surrounded the dead n

"But what is it?" said some one pinching the ambiguous fish all over.

"Well, if we was to say it was a said the podgy exhibitor, "we should ing the thing that wasn't right, but whale specie. It's a GRUMPUS."

"Yes, that's what it is," said the artf pointing to a red wound in the creature "here we struck him, and this 'ere is th where he throws up the water."

"Ah! puffing like a grampus, that a for it," said I.

"'Xactly so," said the podgy man. is a grampus; we don't charge anything but any coppers as gemmen likes to giv in this 'ere box. Thank you, sir."

The swallows are collecting on the ro is time to migrate. The wind gets daily and colder. Every one is leaving Scarcliff the hotel doors the railway buses are with tin boxes and perambulators. A now passed with two sponge-baths spraw the roof. Children are leaving by whc full. The fantastic set at Moulder's ar bottled into flies. A few weeks more a cliff will be a howling wilderness. Th ing-house keepers will have to let lodg each other; the shop-keepers to sell t other. I hope they will like it. The fed on us long enough. The Moulthe grin at the windows, but the Crowthers their lodgers to the station, and, lik homely people as they are, shake them hands, and "tuck them up," to use a phrase, in their respective carriages.

THE GREY MONK'S MISERERE.

THE grey monk patters a midnight prayer
"Miserere Domine!"

Along the corridor, down the stair

A light foot creepeth stealthily.

Pausing, he crosses himself in dread

(Never a footstep there should be)

As near his cell comes that stealthy tread

At the midnight hour so warily.

The grey monk murmurs in gasping prayer
"Miserere Domine!"

When the step that comes adown the stair
Stops at his door familiarly.

His rigid face is grey as his gown
(A ruddy face it is wont to be),
From his trembling hands the beads drop down
As the door flies open readily.

The grey monk shudders, but not with cold
(He has bethought what this may be),
As wrapped in many a muffling fold
A figure enters solemnly.
His terrified heart emits the groan
"Miserere Domine!"
For closer yet without sign or tone
The shape approaches steadily.

The grey monk's brain has begun to swim
Flooded o'er by memory;
The guilt of his life comes home to him
In one fell swoop portentously.
Well he remembers the muffled form
Veiled and voiceless though it be;
Erewhile a woman young and warm:
Now, a spectral mystery.

The grey monk shrinks, as an icy hand,
Pulseless as a Polar sea,
Laid on his wrist in stern command,
Draws him from his bended knee:
Draws him slowly from out his cell
Powerless to resist or flee;
Whilst overhead the midnight bell
Breaks the silence eerily.

The grey monk follows through cloistered gloom
(Miserere Domine!)
Palsied as by a sense of doom
And perpetual misery:
Follows the phantom through secret ways
Never planned by piety,
But trodden oft in amorous days,
Trodden one time murderously.

The dark trees shudder as on they pass;
The tearful dew drops dolefully;
A low moan comes from the conscious grass;
The gusty wind sobs humanly.
The phantom stops at an eerie nook
Black and gruesome as can be,
Where even the moonbeams fear to look
On the grey monk crouching piteously.

Down close by the deep pool's oozy edge,
(Pool as still as death must be),
The grey monk kneels amid weed and sedge,
A wretch in mortal agony.
The spectral finger points to the pool—
Be it fact or phantasy,
He sees a sight of dolour and dool,
Glares, and shrieks despairingly!

An upturned face looks out from the slime
Fair as face of maid might be,
A silent witness of secret crime,
Double sin, and treachery.
Looks as the drowned dead can look
In his eyes reproachingly;
The murderer reads as from written book
The awful doom he yet must dare.

A gracious year for remorse hath gone
To the past's immutability,
Since on the Eve of the good St. John
A soul went to eternity:
Sent all unshriven to God's white throne,
Full of sin as soul may be;
No single moment spared to atone—
So she went, accusingly.

Over the fate of the missing maid
Hung a pall of mystery;
But the grey monk felt no whit afraid,
Still secure in sanctity.
He never confessed the hideous spot
Tainting his soul like leprosy,
Forgot his guilt—but the Judge did not.
Doom comes sure if silently.

Never again will he patter the prayer
"Miserere Domine!"
He wails it out to the midnight air,
And echoes mock his misery.
For when comes round each Eve of St. John
Phantom led, in agony,
That face in the pool he must gaze upon,
Till Time becomes Eternity.

"NO BRIBERY."

I DO not want to name any names, or to hurt anybody's feelings. But facts are facts, and there seems to me something remarkable enough to deserve record in the way Mary and I became man and wife. It was done by an election; and it came about in this wise. I was a young minister among the Dissenters; and it was but a short time since I had left my college, which we, the students, considered as the pivot of the universe, and the cradle of the truth. We could not, any one of us, have been wooed to Oxford or Cambridge by the choicest distinctions. To a man we were Radicals, and it had been our favourite recreation to harangue one another upon the most ultra points of religious and political doctrines. I left college with the conviction that I was one of the men for whom the age was clamouring; and I found myself called to the charge of a small church in Little Coalmoor.

The name describes the place. It was neither town, village, nor hamlet; but a number of scattered houses dotted about a wide moor of coalpit banks. Here and there were a row of dwellings, which might almost be called a street; and there was every variety of places of worship. My own chapel, the chapel of which I had had ambitious and golden dreams while at college, was the newest erection in the neighbourhood; a stiff, ugly, square, red brick building, with a cinder heap behind it, and at the side a row of sickly poplars, which seemed in the last stage of a consumption. Very nearly opposite was a handsome district church—not the parish church, that was at Much Coalmoor, a thriving town two miles off, which sent up two members to parliament. The curate, a dainty and naturally despicable Anglican, used frequently to meet me, as we wended our way to our respective fancies; but we never saw one another, except through the remotest corner of the eye.

If my chapel was ugly, my flock was not much better. It consisted principally of ill-favoured, elderly men, and hard-featured, homely women; except, of course, my Mary, with whom I fell in love at first sight, with a promptitude creditable to my

collegiate training. She was the eldest daughter of our chief member—I don't mean a member of parliament: but a member of the church—a well-to-do man, owning several coal-pits, who at first looked coldly upon my suit, but at length was brought to the point of promising his consent, and a thousand pounds, as soon as the debt should be cleared off the chapel. This debt became the burden of my existence. It amounted to four hundred pounds, for which he held a mortgage at five per cent, which deducted twenty pounds a year from the salary the church would otherwise have given me. With the exception of the mortgagee himself, there was not a man in the congregation who could raise his yearly contribution by a single sovereign. I had no influence elsewhere, and the benevolent strangers of our sect to whom I applied considered the liability small, and knew a hundred chapels worse off. I began to be haunted by a vision of "four hundred pounds in debt," staring at me in large characters upon the red brick front of my chapel. It was as much as I could do to keep it out of my extempore prayers and sermons. As for my thoughts by day, and my dreams by night, I could not by any effort banish it from them, until the canvassing for a forthcoming election began.

It was the first time the Liberals had started a candidate for Much Coalmoor; and I spent my whole time and energy for some weeks beforehand in welding my church members into a solid body of electors, who would no more vote for a Conservative than for the devil. They were a set of honest, sturdy men, a little stubborn and thick-headed perhaps; not quite able to discern the central truth of a question, but very wide-awake as to the swing of the outer grievance which caught them. Incorruptible voters they all swore to be; and the other side tempted them in vain. Like Wordsworth's cattle, they would be "forty voting like one;" and I awaited with peaceful confidence the day for polling.

The canvass was very close, and there were some flagrant cases of bribery and corruption on the part of the Conservatives. Of course our hands were clean, were snow white; but I found it necessary to wink pretty hard at some of the proceedings of our agents. I knew all that went on among my people, and I could swear that they were, one and all, incorruptible.

Nomination day passed, and the canvassing, hot before, grew to a white heat now.

Nobody could predict how the election would end; but it made one shudder to hear the confident assertions of success made by the other side. I had not thought of the debt, and scarcely of Mary, for several days. I was going busily about among my flock, solidifying them. In a few days they were to march in a formidable phalanx to the polling booth, and there register their votes for our Liberal candidate.

I had returned home very weary, and was setting to at my Sunday sermons in my study, which was a small, upper room in the roof, with shoving ceilings and a dormer window, when the door was flung open, and my landlady's daughter announced, in tremulous tones, "Gentlemen as wants to see you." I looked up, and, to my utter amazement, recognised the slim, dainty, foppish Anglican curate who had so often glanced at me from the corner of his eye. Behind him entered a gentleman, aristocratic and somewhat haughty in aspect. Behind him, again, an individual whom I knew as one of the Conservative agents. At sight of them I felt considerable stiffness in my neck and back; but the curate advanced with an outstretched hand, which I could not well refuse.

"Mr. Romilly, my fellow-labourer, I believe?" said he, smiling all over his face.

"I am Samuel Romilly," I replied.

"A relative of the great Sir Samuel Romilly?" he remarked.

I wasn't, but I did not say so, and I felt my joints relax a little. I invited my guests to be seated, and sat down myself in an easy attitude on the corner of my table, as there were only three chairs in the room.

"You have no vote, I think, Mr. Romilly?" said the Conservative agent, very blandly.

"I have not," I answered.

"But you have influence," he continued.

"I have influence."

"Which is exercised upon the Liberal side," said he.

"On the Liberal side, solely," I repeated, emphatically.

There was a pause for a full minute, during which I was conscious of being closely scanned by my three visitors, with a desire to find out what sort of stuff I was made of. I felt a strong inclination to invite them to walk out, but I kept myself still, until one of them broke the silence.

"Mr. Romilly," said the curate, in a conciliatory tone, which was also a tone of suggestion, "there is a debt upon your chapel."

There is a debt upon my chapel," I gloomily, and the load which had upon me seemed the heavier now it was the curate, who recalled it to my remembrance.

"Debt of four hundred pounds," he

did not repeat the mournful words, but so I mutely bowed my head.

"Must be a serious obstacle to your plans," he remarked, meditatively.

"I cried; "it is a blight both upon usefulness and happiness."

There was a second pause, with a fine strain upon it for us all.

"What would you say to a friend,"

one of the three voices, I scarcely noticed, "a Conservative friend, who has paid off the debt upon the chapel?" The curate gave a great bound, but sank again to his old lead.

"Should not be, gentlemen," I answered, "I never be. We are all Liberals at the backbone; and incorruptible voters." "How many votes did you tell me?" asked a stranger.

"Forty," answered the agent; "forty pounds and four hundred pounds debt; a neat and beautiful arithmetical proportion."

"Think about it; think about it, my friend," said the curate, shaking my arm, "don't give us your answer at any rate consult your elders, or your leaders. The question is fairly before you. Do not be in a hurry. The polling day will do for decision."

They had them going away as if in a hurry, and then I turned to my sermon, but it was impossible to get on. On the one side were arrayed all my cherished principles; on the other the chapel, and my Mary, with her fortune of a thousand pounds, my wife. But I resolved to sacrifice everything to my principles; and as the first step towards doing so I took my hat, and walked briskly as I could to tell Mary what I had decided.

I found her in the roomy, pleasant kitchen of a well-plenished house, where the remains of everything used to bring to the line of a hymn, "Enough for each for each." Mary was making tea; and her hands were covered with sugar; but that did not materially interfere with our greeting. Resuming with my air of gloomy resolve, I told her story in brief words.

"Oh Sam!" she exclaimed, clapping her hands, and thereby producing a fine white cloud in which she partially disappeared, "how nice, how very good of them!"

"But, my dear love," I remonstrated, "it will do us no good. I could not possibly consent. It is a vile case of bribery and corruption; and we can have nothing to do with corruption."

"That's a very disagreeable, unpleasant word," said Mary, pouting; "and you don't mean to say you refused such a noble offer!"

"What else could I do, with my principles?" I asked.

"Then now I am positive you don't love me," she cried, bursting into sobs and tears; "I thought you were changed before, and didn't care any longer about the debt; and now I am sure of it. Perhaps you never did love me!"

"Don't I love you, my darling? don't I?" I said, employing every art of soothing at my command, and when she was again calm, I told her more in detail the narrative of my visitors' interview with me.

"Then, after all, it does not rest with you," she said; "you have only to tell it to the church, Sam; and you can call a meeting after service to-night."

We took tea together with the family, and afterwards walked down to the chapel. Upon the gate-posts were pasted some flaming Liberal placards, which seem to stab me. I did not know how it was all to end. Mary's hand was pressing my arm affectionately: but was it possible that I could ever be brought to use my influence in the cause of Conservatism? I might have been preaching on my head, for all I knew; but I suppose I conducted myself as usual, for those who were accustomed to go to sleep went to sleep, and the rest listened with a painstaking air. I announced a church meeting at the close of the service, especially requesting the male members to remain, and I observed that not one of the female ones quitted the chapel.

I came down from the pulpit and seated myself at the end of a bench, asking Mary's father to take the chair, as the business of the meeting was purely secular. I then laid the matter before them simply, as voters for the borough of Much Coalmoor; and such a buzz of comment and discussion arose as I had never heard within those four ugly walls.

"This here is a weighty question," spoke up Brother Pincher, who kept a general provision shop, and was considered one of

our 'cutest men. He had a sharp, half crazy look in his eyes, oddly added to by a small round patch of white hair upon his crown, which, amidst his short stubby shag, had something of the effect of a third eye set in that spot.

"I don't see no call to make any question on it," cried Mrs. Pincher, a small wiry woman with an irrepressible spirit and a shrill voice. "There's no question of there being a debt on the chapel. For my part, I can't see as it's of much consequence who's in, Whigs or Tories; they're all pretty much of a muchness. But it is a matter of consequence whether our debt's paid."

"Ay, ay!" assented Pincher; "a debt on a chapel's a maggot as soon eats up the zeal of the house."

Brother Pincher believed he had quoted Scripture, and paused solemnly for the slow low hum of approval, which was ready to follow any apt quotation from that source.

"But there's our principles," said the chairman, after some further discussion.

"And there's our debt," murmured half a dozen of the female members.

"And there's poor Mr. Romilly," cried out Mrs. Pincher, more shrilly than before, "as would come into twenty pound a year extry, and could get married, and live respectable. It 'ud be a sin and shame if such a offer was throwed away, I say."

The question oscillated to and fro, with good long swings at first, but gradually it began to settle down towards accepting the offer, which appeared too good to be refused. Yet there was a soreness in our spirits at the thought of casting our votes into the Conservative scale. It was more than probable that it would make the Liberals kick the beam. Once or twice I was on the verge of rising to my feet and throwing all my influence upon the losing side; but a look from Mary, half threatening, half beseeching, arrested me. It was too much for mortal man. I sat still, until it was unanimously voted that the debt must be paid.

"But, gentlemen," I said; then, correcting myself, I hastened to add, "My brethren, does it not occur to you that we ought, in fairness, to lay this matter before the committee of our friends? They know that not a man among you would dirty his fingers with a bribe; but it is another question when four hundred pounds is offered for the cause. The committee will be still sitting, though it is near nine

o'clock. Let a deputation of you wait upon them at once."

My motion was accepted with acclamation. Mary's father, Mr. Pincher, without his wife, three or four others, and myself, were deputed to wait immediately upon the Liberal committee. I tried to get off, on the plea of not being a voter; but they made a point of my assistance at the coming interview. We trudged off through the dark two miles of road which led to Much Coalmoor. Talk of conflicts, I never passed through such another conflict. I was almost, if not altogether, a Radical; and here was I on the point of proving myself a renegade and a traitor. I panted to meet with some accident which could deliver me from facing that committee, every one of whom had complimented me upon my zeal and energy. But we gained the town, the street, and the hotel, without any interposition of Providence in my behalf.

It was late, only a few of the committee were at their posts. They welcomed us with a painful cordiality. My fellow-deputies waited for me to be their spokesman; but I stammered so badly that Brother Pincher pushed me on one side, and I saw the white spot on the crown of his head gleaming spectrally.

"The long and the short of it is, gentlemen," he said, with great energy, "as them Conservatives, who we hate as we hate poison, have made us an uncommon good offer; and we can't make up our minds to cut off our noses and spite ourselves by saying 'No' to it. As our young preacher here says, there isn't a man among us as would dirty his own ten fingers with a bribe; but four hundred pounds for the cause isn't to be sneezed at. Politics is politics, but religion's religion; and if one must knock under, it's politics I say. I'm here ready to answer any questions, spiritual or temporal; and politics is spiritual, and religion's temporal—no, religion's temporal, and politics is spiritual; which I hope is quite clear to us all."

It did not seem quite clear to the gentlemen on the committee, who had listened with that bland attention characteristic of such personages. Mary's father nudged me sternly with his elbow. It was the prick of the bayonet to a laggard captive, which goaded me on to the front.

"Let me explain it to you, gentlemen," I said, in nervous tones. "The other side has made overtures to us to clear our chapel of a standing debt of four hundred pounds."

"Oh!" observed one of the committee, with a blank look, not altogether reassuring.

"We are a poor church, and it is a heavy liability," I continued; "but we are heart and soul with you, and I hope you will do us the justice to believe that we are incorruptible voters. For ourselves we would not take a farthing" ["Not a brass farden!" interposed Pincher]; "but for the church we are bound to judge and act differently."

I stopped, falteringly, though Mary's father said "Go on," and Pincher cried "Hear, hear!"

It seemed to me that the committee fully comprehended our position and their own. They retired to the further end of the room, where stood a table, on which lay a number of papers; and then they entered into an animated and protracted debate. I wondered how it was going to end; but the helm was out of my hand altogether, and we were drifting I knew not whither. Was it possible that I could endure the anguish of seeing my own people go up like reluctant martyrs to the Conservative booth, and there offer up their dearest principles as a sacrifice to the cause? For it was pretty certain now that the chapel debt would be paid off as the price of our votes—but by whom? If our own side would but buy us in; I thought, with growing antipathy, of the prim curate, and the glances he had cast at my Mary when we had met him once or twice in the lane. Was his star or mine in the ascendant?

At this instant one of the committee walked along the room, with loud and creaking boots which set my excited nerves all ajar. His countenance was sombre; his mien, I thought, rejective.

"Do all your votes go together?" he asked, gloomily.

"To a man," answered Mary's father, with emphasis.

"Forty votes?" he added.

"Forty votes," repeated Mary's father.

I think I was very near dying of anxiety at that moment.

"They must be ours," said the agent; "four hundred pounds, you say, will pay off your chapel debt. It shall be done. You must give your votes to us."

I do not know how I got back to Little Coalmoor. The change wrought in my future prospects during the last six hours had been wrought too rapidly. But I have a distinct recollection of Mary meeting me at her father's door, and testifying her pleasure in a manner perfectly satisfactory to myself. The next day I had the

gratification of conveying to the Conservatives a dignified refusal of their offer; and a few days after of seeing my people go up like the honest and sturdy Britons they were, to register their votes in accordance with their own independent and incorruptible principles. The Liberals won by a majority of nineteen only.

Mary and I were married soon after; and the chapel is called Election Chapel to this day.

AN UNSUBJECTED WOMAN.

MRS. ELIZABETH CARTER died an unmarried lady, aged eighty-nine, in the year 1806. She was eldest daughter of the Rev. Nicholas Carter, D.D., perpetual curate of the chapel at Deal, afterwards rector of Woodchurch and of Ham, and one of the six preachers in Canterbury Cathedral. Dr. Carter was the son of a rich grazier in the vale of Aylesbury, and in his boyhood had looked forward to a milky-way of life; but was sent rather late to Cambridge, where he became hopelessly addicted to Greek, Latin, and Hebrew. He therefore took orders in the church, and produced, instead of tubs of butter, tracts on controversial theology. Elizabeth was his first child by his first wife; but he married twice, and had a variety of sons and daughters, who were all reared on a diet of Greek, Latin, and Hebrew.

Little Betsey, in her nursery days, did not take kindly to her father's way of dieting his children on dead languages. She suffered so much intellectual congestion from them that she became, as a girl, afflicted with frequent and severe headaches, which were the plague of all her after life. When a young lady, she took to snuff to keep herself awake over her studies, and relieve her head. For the rest of her life she was a snufftaker. Mrs. Carter was not one of the true blue-stockings, for the characteristic of their coterie was not the possession, but the affectation of, much learning. Her early training bent her life in a particular direction, but in that direction she grew vigorously.

Elizabeth Carter in her youth learnt French by being sent to board for a year in the house of a French refugee minister, she gave all the time required of our grandmothers to "the various branches of needlework," and with much pains learnt to spoil music with the spinet and the German flute. She had been most assiduously trained in Greek, Latin, and Hebrew; in these studies she succeeded best, and especially she took to Greek, which became a living tongue to her, and which she conquered without help of such Greek grammars as were then in use. Dr. Johnson said in compliment of a celebrated scholar, that he understood Greek better than any one he had ever known except Elizabeth Carter. Like other young ladies, Betsey Carter wrote verse, and at the

age of twenty-one she published a very small collection of poems, with a Greek motto from Euripides, signifying that they were nothing. She liked the morality of Mrs. Rowe's letters, which are still to be found lying neglected on old bookstalls, and wrote on the occasion of her death, that it would be her own justest pride,

My best attempt for fame,
That joins my own to Philomela's name,

Philomela being Mrs. Rowe. She admired also the poetry of Stephen Duck, the thresher, patronised and pensioned by the Queen of George the Second, and addressed him in lines which begin

Accept, O Duck, the Muse's grateful lay.

When about twenty years old there was some prospect of a place at Court for her if she understood the German of the reigning family. She learnt German on this hint, but did not go to Court, and for many years saw London life only when visiting among her relations. Afterwards she learnt Spanish and Italian, some Portuguese, and even Arabic, making for herself an Arabic Dictionary. She had a taste also for geography, ancient of course, knowing a great deal more of the geography of Greece B.C. 1184, than of Middlesex in her own time. But with all her work she had passed a youth not without playfulness, and she was throughout life heartily and cheerfully religious, with a wholesome disrelish of controversy, wherein she was wiser than her father.

Surely the doctor's influence would have sufficed to keep her zeal for study within wholesome bounds. She was throughout life an early riser, considering herself to be up late if she was only up by seven. Her common time of rising was between four and five. Early to rise comes well enough after early to bed; but we have Dr. Carter praising his daughter in her girlhood for a virtuous resolution not to study beyond midnight. The only stand he made was against her use of snuff to keep herself awake and abate headache. When she was the worse for the want of it, he let her have it; his protest failed against the snuff, and was not made against the overwork that made snuff necessary: and not snuff only. Poor little Betsey Carter used also to keep herself awake for night study by binding a wet towel round her head, putting a wet cloth to the pit of her stomach, and chewing green tea and coffee. Be it observed, nevertheless, that she did not kill herself. She lived to the age of eighty-nine. But her headaches were the penalty inflicted on her for abridging hours of sleep.

Now, it is not just to the body to overcome its fatigues habitually with snuff in the nose, green tea-leaves in the mouth, a wet towel round the head, and a wet cloth at the pit of the stomach. But against all that, was here to be set a placidly cheerful temper and a mind well occupied. Elizabeth Carter, in her youth, could get through nine hours' dancing with

enjoyment, and walk to it three miles and back in a gale of wind. She studied astronomy, but had not a soul above shirt-buttons, and made her brother's shirts. It was suspected that her love of study had produced a secret resolution against marriage. She said, indeed, at eighty-six, "Nobody knows what may happen. I never said I would not marry;" and among offers refused in her youth was one that tempted her enough to make her hesitate while her friends urged acceptance. If he had not furnished evidence against himself by publishing a few rather licentious verses, Elizabeth would probably have taken to this suitor's shirt-buttons, and had a livelier firstborn than her translation of Epictetus. When she was sixty-five years old, Hayley dedicated his *Essay on Old Maids* to Mrs. Elizabeth Carter, as "Poet, Philosopher, and Old Maid," an attention which she did not gratefully appreciate, because she disliked the temper of his essay. Perhaps she was too fastidious. Punch himself was in awe of her. She was not above going to a puppet-show, but when she went to one at Deal, "Why, Punch," said the showman, "what makes you so stupid?" "I can't talk my own talk," said Punch. "The famous Mrs. Carter is here."

And how had the lady become famous? Thus: Edward Cave, of the Gentleman's Magazine, being an old friend of her father's, admitted into his magazine occasional bits of verse from her, signed Eliza. The first appeared before she was quite seventeen years old. Through Cave she made the acquaintance of young Samuel Johnson upon his first coming to London. Two or three months after his first contribution to Cave's magazine had appeared—it was a Latin alcaic ode—Dr. Carter replied from the country to his daughter's letter from town, "You mention Johnson; but this is a name with which I am utterly unacquainted. Neither his scholastic, critical, or poetical character ever reached my ears." Johnson was then aged nine-and-twenty and Miss Carter twenty-one. It was in Cave's shop, as fellow-contributor to the Gentleman's Magazine, before either of them had tasted fame, that the acquaintanceship began to which Elizabeth Carter owes much of her fame. Writing to her eighteen or twenty years after the beginning of their cordial but ceremonious friendship, Johnson said, "To every joy is appended a sorrow. The name of Miss Carter introduces the memory of Cave. Poor dear Cave! I owed him much; for to him I owe that I have known you;" and he subscribed himself her most obedient and most humble servant, "with respect, which I neither owe nor pay to any other." At the age of twenty-two Miss Carter had translated out of French the criticism of De Crousaz upon Pope's *Essay on Man*, and immediately afterwards translated also for Cave, from the Italian of Algarotti, six dialogues for the use of ladies upon Newton's philosophy of light and colour. Samuel Johnson, then at work for Cave, corrected the proofs for the young lady, of whom the learned Doctor

Thomas Birch then made a note, which showed that she already seemed to be upon the way to fame. "This lady," said Dr. Birch, in noting her bit of translation, "is a very extraordinary phenomenon in the republic of letters, and justly to be ranked with the Sulpitias of the ancients and the Schurmanns and the Daciers of the moderns. For to an uncommon vivacity and delicacy of genius, and an accuracy of judgment worthy the maturest years, she has added the knowledge of the ancient and modern languages at an age when an equal skill in any one of them would be a distinction in a person of the other sex."

A learned woman was a marvel in those days, and her place in creation yet unsettled. Already there cropped up in connexion with Miss Carter, when she was little more than a girl, the sublime idea, not merely that she was fit to be an elector of M.P.s, but that she was competent to be one. "Here's all Deal," wrote one of her sisters to her, "is in amazement that you want to be a Member of the Parliament House; and Mrs. Blank, was told it, but so strongly affirmed that it was no such thing, that she came to our house quite eager to ask, and was quite amazed to hear 'twas so. Let me know in your next whether 'tis a jest, or that you really want to go."

Her scholarship and knowledge of modern languages must have attracted a good deal of general attention, for Miss Carter was hailed as a sister prodigy by the marvellous youth John Philip Baratier, who was about four years younger than herself. Of Baratier it is said that, when four years old, he talked with his mother in French, with his father in Latin, and with the servants in German. He read Greek at the age of six, Hebrew at eight, and translated Benjamin of Tudela's travels out of Hebrew into French when a boy of eleven. When he was but fourteen years old, the University of Halle conferred on him the degree of Master of Arts, and he astonished crowded audiences by his disputations upon fourteen theses. He died of consumption before he had attained the age of twenty, and it was in the last year or two of his life that he heard of the learned English damsel Elizabeth Carter. He then opened a correspondence, in which he praised her as one whose Latin verse the Romans of the Augustan age would have taken for that of the swan of Mantua, or of a Latin Sappho.

While corresponding with Baratier, Miss Carter formed a more abiding friendship with Miss Catherine Talbot, a bishop's granddaughter, who lived with her widowed mother in the family of Dr. Secker, then Bishop of Oxford, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury; Dr. Secker gratefully remembering that he was indebted to her family for his first steps of promotion in the church. Through her friend Catherine Talbot, Miss Carter obtained the friendship of Dr. Secker, which was so emphatically shown, that when the archbishop became a widower the London world assigned to him Elizabeth Carter for a second wife. But

some there were who gave her to Dr. Hayter, Bishop of London. "Brother Hayter," the archbishop said one day, "the world has it that one of us two is to marry Madam Carter; now I have no such intention, and therefore resign her to you." "I will not pay your grace the same compliment," replied the bishop. "The world does me much honour by the report." So as Deal had held that Elizabeth Carter was the woman to have a seat in the House of Commons, London believed her place to be among the bishops. Or among the players. For when Edward Moore's play of the Gamester came out, it was held to be so highly judicious and moral, that it was at first attributed to Mrs. Carter. Moore wrote also Fables for the Female Sex, which were not less worthy of one who might be assigned as bride to an archbishop. But among he-writers of that day the true primate of the female world was Samuel Richardson; and Richardson embalmed a characteristic piece of Elizabeth Carter's verse, her Ode to Wisdom, in his *Clarissa*. He had not been able to find out the author of the ode, and had, therefore, republished it in his novel (in the first edition part of it only) without consent; for which, though he had done honour thereto by engraving it and giving it with music, he was called to order by the lady. He replied with extreme courtesy, as one who "would sooner be thought unjust or ungenerous by any lady in the world than by the author of the Ode to Wisdom."

When at home with her father in the parsonage at Deal, Miss Carter had a bell at the head of her bed, pulled by a string which went through a chink in her window, down into the sexton's garden. The sexton, who got up between four and five, made it his first duty to toll this bell lustily. "Some evil-minded people of my acquaintance," she wrote to a friend, "have most wickedly threatened to cut my bell-rope, which would be the utter undoing of me, for I should infallibly sleep out the whole summer." Up thus betimes, she went to work as a schoolboy to his lessons, and thence to the ramble before breakfast over sunny commons, or through dewy cornfields, or the brambles of the narrow lane, pulling sometimes a friend out of bed to be companion of the walk, and respectfully noted by the country folks as "Parson Carter's daughter." Then home, and "when I have made myself fit to appear among human creatures we go to breakfast, and are extremely chatty; and this and tea in the afternoon are the most sociable and delightful parts of the day. We have a great variety of topics in which everybody bears a part, till we get insensibly upon books; and whenever we go beyond Latin and French, my sister and the rest walk off, and leave my father and me to finish the discourse and the teakettle by ourselves, which we should infallibly do, if it held as much as Solomon's molten sea." Her work in later life was mainly to keep fresh the fruits of early study. Her headaches had to be considered, and her book-

work was done with rests every half-hour, and rambles off to water her pinks and roses, or to gossip a few minutes with any friend or relation who was in the house. But she read every day before breakfast two chapters of the Bible, and a sermon, besides some Hebrew, Greek, and Latin; and after breakfast, or at some other time of the day, a little of every modern language she had learnt, in order to keep her knowledge of it from rusting.

When she began her translation of Epictetus, at the wish of her friends Dr. Secker and Catherine Talbot, Elizabeth Carter was helping her father by taking the sole charge of the education of her youngest brother, whom she sent up to Cambridge so well prepared that he astonished much the examiners, who asked at what school he had been educated, with the reply that his only teacher was his eldest sister. Miss Carter's translation of Epictetus was not begun with a view to publication, but when it was done, and revised by Dr. Secker, there was publication in view, and she was told that a life of Epictetus must be written. Her reply to Miss Talbot will astonish those who connect learning in women with want of shirt-buttons among men. She said, "Whoever that somebody or other is who is to write the life of Epictetus, seeing I have a dozen shirts to make, I do opine, dear Miss Talbot, that it cannot be I." It was urged on her also that she must add notes to christianise the book of the heathen philosopher, and prevent "danger to superficial readers." She did all that was urged on her, at the same time that she was finishing the preparation of her brother's back and brains for college.

The book appeared in seventeen 'fifty-eight, and there were more than a thousand subscribers for it. By way of compliment, more copies were subscribed for than were claimed, and the lady earned by this labour a thousand pounds. The book, also, when published, was maintained in good repute. Some years afterwards her friend Dr. Secker brought her a bookseller's catalogue, and said, "Here, Madam Carter, see how ill I am used by the world. Here are my Sermons selling at half price, while your Epictetus is not to be had under eighteen shillings, only three shillings less than the original subscription." Such a work from a woman was a thing to be talked of in Europe, as the world then went. An account of the learned lady was published even in Russia, where, as Miss Carter said, they were just learning to walk on their hind legs.

Four years later appeared Miss Carter's poems, in a little volume dedicated to the Earl of Bath; and she was now able to have a lodging of her own in London—a room on a first floor in Clarges-street—whence she was always fetched out to dinner by the chairs or carriages of her many friends. Her brothers and sisters had grown up and been put out in the world; her father's second wife was dead, and he was moving about at Deal from one hired house to another. Elizabeth then bought herself a house by the Deal shore, took her

father for its tenant, and lived there with him until his death, he working in his library, and she in hers, with the annual treat of a visit to London. The nautical world of Deal, impressed by her erudition, held that she had done something in mathematics which had puzzled all the naval officers. She had foretold a storm, and some were not at all sure that she could not raise one. A young man remarked to a verger's wife in Canterbury Cathedral that it was very cold. "Yes," she said, "and it will be a dreadful winter, and a great scarcity of corn; for the famous Miss Carter has foretold it." While her house at Deal was being settled (she had bought two small houses and was turning them into one), Madam Carter took a tour upon the Continent in company with the Queen of the Blue Stockings, Mrs. Montagu, and the Earl of Bath, who died in the next year rather suddenly, and did not, as her friends had thought he would, bequeath her an annuity. The bulk of his property went to his only surviving brother, who died three years later, and the next heir then, delicately professing that it was to fulfil Lord Bath's intentions, secured to Miss Carter an annuity of a hundred pounds during her life, which, towards the close of her life, was increased to a hundred and fifty. The annuity came to Miss Carter in seventeen 'sixty-seven, and a couple of years earlier she had received a like annuity from Mrs. Montagu, who then, by her husband's death, obtained the whole disposal of his fortune. An uncle of Miss Carter's, who was a silk-mercier, had also died and left fourteen thousand pounds to Dr. Carter and his children, of which Elizabeth's share was fifteen hundred in her father's lifetime. In later years an annuity of forty pounds came to Miss Carter from another friend. She was rich, therefore, beyond her needs; for she lived inexpensively, and had money to spare for struggling relations, and for those of the poor whose griefs she saw. When left alone in the Deal house, she kept up a healthy hospitality with tea and rubbers of whist for threepenny points; was a neat cheerful old woman, simply dressed and scrupulously clean, before her time in knowledge of the value of a free use of cold water, fond of her tea and her snuff, and never worrying her country friends with ostentation of her learning.

The headaches at last almost put an end to study. Mrs. Carter read Fanny Burney's novels with enjoyment, delighted in Mrs. Radcliffe's, objected to the morality of Charlotte Smith's, and thought there was more of Shakespeare in Joanna Baillie than in any writer since his time. That was because she had a strong prejudice on behalf of female writers at a time when women were only beginning to find their way into the broad space they now occupy in English literature. She thought much less of Burns than of Joanna Baillie, because Miss Baillie was always proper, and Burns was in some places anything but ladylike. Though living at Deal, she refused to buy there any article which, by its cheapness or otherwise, she could suspect to have been smuggled. But her reason

for this, given to Mrs. Montagu, was a generous one: "I cannot help pitying these poor ignorant people, brought up from their infancy to this wretched trade, and taught by the example of their superiors to think there can be no great harm in it, when they every day see the families of both hereditary and delegated legislators loading their coaches with contraband goods. Surely in people whom Heaven has blessed with honours and fortune and lucrative employments of government, the fault is much greater than that of the poor creatures whom they thus encourage?" She was a kindly old woman, whose gentle courteous manner won the hearts of servants in the houses that she visited. One lady ascribed some of the excellence of her own servants to Mrs. Carter's influence upon them; for she was often mindful of the hearts and heads and open ears of servants behind the chairs at dinner, in a way that made her direct conversation into a form that would ensure their carrying away some wholesome thoughts from their attendance.

Now this, faithful in small things, was a good womanly life, although the life of a lady given to Greek, Latin, and Hebrew, and much other erudition, a lady high in honour at the original blue-stocking assemblies, and one who could be truly described as a snuffy old maid. That description of her would be true, but not exhaustive. She had a woman's religiousness devoid of theologic spite; a woman's social vivacity of speech, with a disrelish of uncharitable comment and flippancy bitterness which went far to suppress that form of conversation in her presence. She cheered her family and eased her father's labour and cost in the rearing of his younger children. She blended the writing of an essay upon Epictetus with the making of a set of shirts. Without distinguished genius, by industry with love of knowledge and a calm adherence to her sense of right, she passed into an old age honoured with affectionate respect from people of all ranks of life and all degrees of intellect. Looking back at her out of our century into hers, we may find that many of her ways and notions were old fashioned; but in the good fashion that never grows old, she was a woman unspoilt by her learning; and the less likely to be spoilt because it was true learning, the result of steady work.

GREEN TEA.

A CASE REPORTED BY MARTIN HESSELIUS, THE GERMAN PHYSICIAN.

IN TEN CHAPTERS. PREFACE.

THOUGH carefully educated in medicine and surgery, I have never practised either. The study of each continues, nevertheless, to interest me profoundly. Neither idleness nor caprice caused my secession from the honourable profession which I had just entered. The cause was a very trifling scratch inflicted by a dissecting-knife. This

trifle cost me the loss of two fingers, amputated promptly, and the more painful loss of my health, for I have never been quite well since, and have seldom been twelve months together in the same place.

In my wanderings I became acquainted with Dr. Martin Hesselius, a wanderer like myself, like me a physician, and like me an enthusiast in his profession. Unlike me in this, that his wanderings were voluntary, and he a man, if not of fortune, as we estimate fortune in England, at least in what our forefathers used to term "easy circumstances."

In Dr. Martin Hesselius I found my master. His knowledge was immense, his grasp of a case was an intuition. He was the very man to inspire a young enthusiast, like me, with awe and delight. My admiration has stood the test of time and survived the separation of death. I am sure it was well-founded.

For nearly twenty years I acted as his medical secretary. His immense collection of papers he has left in my care, to be arranged, indexed, and bound. His treatment of some of these cases is curious. He writes in two distinct characters. He describes what he saw and heard as an intelligent layman might, and when in this style of narrative he has seen the patient either through his own hall-door, to the light of day, or through the gates of darkness to the caverns of the dead, he returns upon the narrative, and in the terms of his art, and with all the force and originality of genius, proceeds to the work of analysis, diagnosis, and illustration.

Here and there a case strikes me as of a kind to amuse or horrify a lay reader with an interest quite different from the peculiar one which it may possess for an expert. With slight modifications, chiefly of language, and of course a change of names, I copy the following. The narrator is Dr. Martin Hesselius. I find it among the voluminous notes of cases which he made during a tour in England about fifty-four years ago.

It is related in a series of letters to his friend Professor Van Loo of Leyden. The professor was not a physician, but a chemist, and a man who read history and metaphysics and medicine, and had, in his day, written a play.

The narrative is therefore, if somewhat less valuable as a medical record, necessarily written in a manner more likely to interest an unlearned reader.

These letters, from a memorandum at-

tached, appear to have been returned on the death of the professor, in 1819, to Dr. Hesselius. They are written, some in English, some in French, but the greater part in German. I am a faithful, though I am conscious, by no means a graceful, translator, and although, here and there, I omit some passages, and shorten others, and disguise names, I have interpolated nothing.

CHAPTER I. DR. HESSELIUS RELATES HOW HE MET THE REV. MR. JENNINGS.

THE Rev. Mr. Jennings is tall and thin. He is middle-aged, and dresses with a natty, old-fashioned, high-church precision. He is naturally a little stately, but not at all stiff. His features, without being handsome, are well formed, and their expression extremely kind, but also shy.

I met him one evening at Lady Mary Heyduke's. The modesty and benevolence of his countenance are extremely prepossessing.

We were but a small party, and he joined agreeably enough in the conversation. He seems to enjoy listening very much more than contributing to the talk; but what he says is always to the purpose and well said. He is a great favourite of Lady Mary's, who, it seems, consults him upon many things, and thinks him the most happy and blessed person on earth. Little knows she about him.

The Rev. Mr. Jennings is a bachelor, and has, they say, sixty thousand pounds in the funds. He is a charitable man. He is most anxious to be actively employed in his sacred profession, and yet, though always tolerably well elsewhere, when he goes down to his vicarage in Warwickshire, to engage in the active duties of his sacred calling, his health soon fails him, and in a very strange way. So says Lady Mary.

There is no doubt that Mr. Jennings's health does break down in, generally, a sudden and mysterious way, sometimes in the very act of officiating in his old and pretty church at Kenlis. It may be his heart, it may be his brain. But so it has happened three or four times, or oftener, that after proceeding a certain way in the service, he has on a sudden stopped short, and after a silence, apparently quite unable to resume, he has fallen into solitary, inaudible prayer, his hands and eyes uplifted, and then pale as death, and in the agitation of a strange shame and horror, descended trembling, *got into the vestry-room, and left his congregation, without explanation, to them-*

selves. This occurred when his curate was absent. When he goes down to Kenlis, now, he always takes care to provide a clergyman to share his duty, and to supply his place on the instant, should he become thus suddenly incapacitated.

When Mr. Jennings breaks down quite, and bends a retreat from the vicarage, and returns to London, where, in a dark street off Piccadilly, he inhabits a very narrow house, Lady Mary says that he is always perfectly well. I have my own opinion about that. There are degrees of course. We shall see.

Mr. Jennings is a perfectly gentleman-like man. People, however, remark something odd. There is an impression a little ambiguous. One thing which certainly contributes to it, people, I think, don't remember—perhaps, distinctly remark. But I did, almost immediately. Mr. Jennings has a way of looking sidelong upon the carpet, as if his eye followed the movements of something there. This, of course, is not always. It occurs only now and then. But often enough to give a certain oddity as I have said to his manner, and in this glance travelling along the floor, there is something both shy and anxious.

A medical philosopher, as you are good enough to call me, elaborating theories by the aid of cases sought out by himself, and by him watched and scrutinised with more time at command, and consequently infinitely more minuteness than the ordinary practitioner can afford, falls insensibly into habits of observation which accompany him everywhere, and are exercised, as some people would say, impertinently, upon every subject that presents itself with the least likelihood of rewarding inquiry.

There was a promise of this kind in this slight, timid, kindly, but reserved gentleman, whom I met for the first time at this agreeable little evening gathering. I observed, of course, more than I here set down; but I reserve all that borders on the technical for a strictly scientific paper.

I may remark, that when I here speak of medical science, I do so as I hope some day to see it more generally understood, in a much more comprehensive sense than its generally material treatment would warrant. I believe that the entire natural world is but the ultimate expression of that spiritual world from which, and in which alone, it has its life. I believe that the essential man is a spirit, that the spirit is an organised substance, but as different in point of material from what we ordinarily

understand by matter, as light or electricity is; that the material body is, in the most literal sense, a vesture, and death consequently no interruption of the living man's existence, but simply his extrication from the natural body—a process which commences at the moment of what we term death, and the completion of which, at furthest, a few days later, is the resurrection "in power."

The person who weighs the consequences of these positions will probably see their practical bearing upon medical science. This is, however, by no means the proper place for displaying the proofs and discussing the consequences of this too generally unrecognised state of facts.

In pursuance of my habit, I was covertly observing Mr. Jennings, with all my caution—I think he perceived it—and I saw plainly that he was as cautiously observing me. Lady Mary happening to address me by my name, as Dr. Hesselius, I saw that he glanced at me more sharply, and then became thoughtful for a few minutes.

After this, as I conversed with a gentleman at the other end of the room, I saw him look at me more steadily, and with an interest which I thought I understood. I then saw him take an opportunity of chatting with Lady Mary, and was, as one always is, perfectly aware of being the subject of a distant inquiry and answer.

This tall clergyman approached me by-and-by: and in a little time we had got into conversation. When two people, who like reading, and know books and places, having travelled, wish to converse, it is very strange if they can't find topics. It was not accident that brought him near me, and led him into conversation. He knew German, and had read my *Essays on Metaphysical Medicine*, which suggest more than they actually say.

This courteous man, gentle, shy, plainly a man of thought and reading, who moving and talking among us, was not altogether of us, and whom I already suspected of leading a life whose transactions and alarms were carefully concealed, with an impenetrable reserve from, not only the world, but his best beloved friends—was cautiously weighing in his own mind the idea of taking a certain step with regard to me.

I penetrated his thoughts without his being aware of it, and was careful to say nothing which could betray to his sensitive vigilance my suspicions respecting his position, or my surmises about his plans respecting myself.

We chatted upon indifferent subjects for a time; but at last he said:

"I was very much interested by some papers of yours, Dr. Hesselius, upon what you term *Metaphysical Medicine*—I read them in German, ten or twelve years ago—have they been translated?"

"No, I'm sure they have not—I should have heard. They would have asked my leave, I think."

"I asked the publishers here, a few months ago, to get the book for me in the original German; but they tell me it is out of print."

"So it is, and has been for some years; but it flatters me as an author to find that you have not forgotten my little book, although," I added, laughing, "ten or twelve years is a considerable time to have managed without it; but I suppose you have been turning the subject over again in your mind, or something has happened lately to revive your interest in it."

At this remark, accompanied by a glance of inquiry, a sudden embarrassment disturbed Mr. Jennings, analogous to that which makes a young lady blush and look foolish. He dropped his eyes, and folded his hands together uneasily, and looked oddly, and you would have said, guilty for a moment.

I helped him out of his awkwardness in the best way, by appearing not to observe it, and going straight on, I said: "Those revivals of interest in a subject happen to me often; one book suggests another, and often sends me back a wild-goose chase over an interval of twenty years. But if you still care to possess a copy, I shall be only too happy to provide you; I have still got two or three by me—and if you allow me to present one I shall be very much honoured."

"You are very good indeed," he said, quite at his ease again, in a moment: "I almost despaired—I don't know how to thank you."

"Pray don't say a word; the thing is really so little worth that I am only ashamed of having offered it, and if you thank me any more I shall throw it into the fire in a fit of modesty."

Mr. Jennings laughed. He inquired where I was staying in London, and after a little more conversation on a variety of subjects, he took his departure.

CHAPTER II. THE DOCTOR QUESTIONS LADY MARY, AND SHE ANSWERS.

"I like your vicar so much, Lady Mary," said I, so soon as he was gone. "He has

read, travelled, and thought, and having also suffered, he ought to be an accomplished companion."

"So he is, and, better still, he is a really good man," said she. "His advice is invaluable about my schools, and all my little undertakings at Dawlbridge, and he's so painstaking, he takes so much trouble—you have no idea—wherever he thinks he can be of use: he's so good-natured and so sensible."

"It is pleasant to hear so good an account of his neighbourly virtues. I can only testify to his being an agreeable and gentle companion, and in addition to what you have told me, I think I can tell you two or three things about him," said I.

"Really!"

"Yes, to begin with, he's unmarried."

"Yes, that's right,—go on."

"He has been writing, that is he *was*, but for two or three years, perhaps, he has not gone on with his work, and the book was upon some rather abstract subject—perhaps theology."

"Well, he was writing a book, as you say; I'm not quite sure what it was about, but only that it was nothing that I cared for, very likely you are right, and he certainly did stop—yes."

"And although he only drank a little coffee here to-night, he likes tea, at least, did like it, extravagantly."

"Yes; that's quite true."

"He drank green tea, a good deal, didn't he?" I pursued.

"Well, that's very odd! Green tea was a subject on which we used almost to quarrel."

"But he has quite given that up," I continued.

"So he has."

"And, now, one more fact. His mother, or his father, did you know them?"

"Yes, both; his father is only ten years dead, and their place is near Dawlbridge. We knew them very well," she answered.

"Well, either his mother or his father—I should rather think his father—saw a ghost," said I.

"Well, you really are a conjurer, Doctor Hesselius."

"Conjurer or no, haven't I said right?"

I answered, merrily.

"You certainly have, and it *was* his father: he was a silent, whimsical man, and he used to bore my father about his

dreams, and at last he told him a story about a ghost he had seen and talked with, and a very odd story it was. I remember it particularly because I was so afraid of him. This story was long before he died—when I was quite a child—and his ways were so silent and moping, and he used to drop in, sometimes, in the dusk, when I was alone in the drawing-room, and I used to fancy there were ghosts about him."

I smiled and nodded.

"And now having established my character as a conjurer I think I must say good-night," said I.

"But how *did* you find it out?"

"By the planets of course, as the gipsies do," I answered, and so, gaily, we said good-night.

Next morning I sent the little book he had been inquiring after, and a note to Mr. Jennings, and on returning late that evening, I found that he had called and left his card. He asked whether I was at home, and asked at what hour he would be most likely to find me.

Does he intend opening his case, and consulting me "professionally," as they say? I hope so. I have already conceived a theory about him. It is supported by Lady Mary's answers to my parting questions. I should like much to ascertain from his own lips. But what can I do consistently with good breeding to invite a confession? Nothing. I rather think he meditates one. At all events, my dear Van L., I shan't make myself difficult of access; I mean to return his visit to-morrow. It will be only civil in return for his politeness, to ask to see him. Perhaps something may come of it. Whether much, little, or nothing, my dear Van L., you shall hear.

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IN FIVE BOOKS.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER VIII. HUGH WILL NOT BE AMBITIOUS.

ABOUT the middle of June, Mr. Frost departed for Italy. He was only to be away a fortnight at first. He would then return to London: and if all went well, would go back to Naples in the autumn.

He had been to Gower-street several times before leaving England. He had spoken to Hugh about his prospects, and had said that if matters succeeded with the company who were employing him, he should be able to offer Hugh a splendid chance of distinguishing himself.

"But," said Hugh, "this great company will have a great architect of their own. There will be subordinates, of course, to do the drudgery, and the big man will get the credit: I do not say that that is unfair. Big men have to earn their bigness—mostly—and I am the last fellow in the world to grudge them what they've earned. Besides, I do not want to be wandering about the Continent. I have served my apprenticeship, and learnt my trade, and now I want to try to make a home for myself, and a place in the world. I am not ambitious—"

"A man ought to be ambitious," said Mr. Frost.

"There might be a good deal to be said on that subject. But at all events, a man ought not to say he is ambitious, if he isn't!"

His mother and Mr. Frost succeeded, however, in persuading Hugh to remain some months longer in his present position. He was engaged by Digby and West at a

weekly salary, and no permanent arrangement had yet been come to. He would let things go on as they were for a while.

Zillah had gained a reprieve, but her anxieties remained active. At the best, she had trouble before her. If all went well, and her money—Hugh's money—were restored by the end of the year, it would still devolve on her to give her son some explanation as to this accession of fortune.

Her son's love and respect were very precious to her: even as her husband's had been. She knew that Hugh inherited his father's stern hatred of deception. What would he say when he knew that his mother had concealed so important a matter—and one which he surely had a right to be made acquainted with—all these years? And if he asked her, "Mother, *why* have you done this?" how should she answer him?

She was a woman of acute and observant intelligence in most cases. In all that concerned her only son, she was, of course, peculiarly quick to see and to understand. She knew that Hugh had fallen in love, and that his love was not the light, boyish fancy that Mr. Frost had tried to persuade her it would prove to be. Hugh had said no word to her on the subject, but there needed no word to convince her that she was right. And she liked Maud. She did not love her. She was not clingingly affectionate by nature, and all the love in her heart was absorbed by her son. But she had a kindly regard for the girl. She admired and approved her. She was not grudging or unjust because this stranger with the deep blue eyes and golden hair had become paramount in Hugh's thoughts. She knew him to be steadfast and true: and she was well assured that neither lover nor wife would push herself from her due place in her son's love and respect. But as

she watched Hugh's growing love for Maud, the thought of falling from her own high honourable place in his regard became more and more painful and intolerable to her. Hugh had implicit faith in his mother's purity and goodness. She was his high model of womanhood; and he had often said to her, "I only hope my wife may be as good as my mother! I can't wish for anything better." But could he still say so when he knew—?

There was a little human jealousy within her breast which made her feel that to humble herself now before Hugh, and say to him, "My son, I have sinned. Forgive me!" would be to yield to that other woman whom he loved, a too absolute supremacy: to abdicate in her favour the sole pride and glory of her life. She did not hate Maud for stealing Hugh's heart. The wife would be nearest and dearest; that, she was resigned, if not content, to bear. She would still be his honoured mother. But she thought she should come to hate Maud if Hugh ever were to diminish, by one iota, his tribute of filial reverence. And all this time Maud knew no more of the position she occupied in the thoughts of the mother and son than we any of us know of the place we hold in each other's minds.

After the party at Mr. Lovegrove's, Maud had seriously begged her aunt not to take her out to any similar gathering again.

"I would not say this, dear Aunt Hilda," said Maud, "if I thought that *you* derived any gratification from the society of those people. But I watched you the other night, and I saw—I fancied—that you looked very weary and uninterested."

"Not uninterested as long as my pet was there. I like to see ye admired, Maud."

"Admired! Dear Aunt Hilda——"

"Well I know, I grant ye, that the folks there were not of the class you ought to associate with. And if I were but in my rightful and proper position, what a delight it would be for me to present ye to the world you were born to live in! But as to presenting, my dear child, sure how would I go to court in a street cab? and living in Gower-street! I don't say anything against it, and some of the old family mansions are in drearier places, but, after all, you know, there would be a degree of incongruity about attempting to entertain, or anything of that sort, in a lodging of this kind; and ye know, Maud, *he* barely allows me enough for the necessaries of *life as it is*. Some women would run him into debt. But I couldn't bring myself to

do that—barring absolute necessity: not to mention that I'd have to bear all the bullying and annoyance, seeing that he's safe and comfortable away beyond seas!"

Maud endeavoured to persuade her aunt that it was no feeling of pride which rendered her unwilling to go to the Lovegroves. She disclaimed such a sentiment with much warmth. No; it was simply that the people she met there were uncongenial to her. That might be partly her own fault, but the fact remained so.

Maud did not say that the anxiety of suspense about Veronica made it irksome to her to see strangers. It was a subject that could not be mentioned between her aunt and herself. But as the weeks wore on, and no answer came to her letter, her heart sank. She had scarcely been aware how strong a hope had sprung up within her on the receipt of Veronica's letter, until she began to measure the depth of her disappointment as the time rolled by and brought no further communication.

In the old days at Shipley, Maud would have enjoyed the oddity and newness of the society she had met at the Lovegroves'. But now such enjoyment was impossible to her. She was conscious of nervously shrinking from a new face, of nervously dreading a chance word which might touch on the still recent shame and sorrow that had befallen them all, as a wounded person starts away from the approach of even the gentlest hand lest it should lay itself unawares upon his hurt.

Mr. Frost's sudden mention of his proposed journey to Italy had disturbed her for this reason: though she told herself how absurd and weak it was to be so disturbed. Hundreds of people went to Italy of course; many even of the few people she knew, were likely enough to do so. But in the frequent silent direction of her thoughts towards Veronica, she had grown to associate her entirely with the word 'Italy', as though that country held but one figure for all men's observation!

The question persistently presented itself to her mind: Did Mr. Frost know the story of Veronica? Was he aware who the man was with whom she had fled?

Something a little forced and unnatural in Mr. Frost's manner of introducing the subject of his approaching journey, had struck her. Why should he have selected her to speak to respecting Hugh Lockwood's prospects? Had he had any purpose in his mind of sounding her respecting her feeling towards Veronica, and had he chosen

this excuse for giving her the information that he was bound for Italy?

The impossibility of discussing this matter with her aunt, and the necessity she was under of shutting herself up from the consolation of sympathy or companionship regarding it, made her morbidly sensitive. She brooded and tormented herself.

At last she took a resolution:—she would speak to Mrs. Lockwood. That the latter had learned the whole story from her Aunt Hilda, she was well convinced. But even were that not so, Mrs. Lockwood would have heard it all from Hugh. Mr. Frost was the Lockwoods' old and intimate friend. Maud resolved to speak to Mrs. Lockwood. One afternoon after their early dinner she stole down-stairs, leaving Lady Tallis asleep according to custom. Her tap at the parlour door was answered by Mrs. Lockwood's soft voice saying, "Come in;" and she entered.

Mrs. Lockwood sat at the table, with an account-book before her. She looked, Maud thought, old and harassed.

"Do I disturb you, Mrs. Lockwood? Please say so, if I do; and I will take another opportunity——"

"You don't disturb me in the least, my dear Miss Desmond. I have just finished my accounts for the month. Do sit down and tell me what I can do for you. There is nothing the matter with my lady?" she added, hastily, looking at Maud's face.

"Nothing, nothing. Do not let me startle you. I wanted to take the liberty of speaking to you in confidence—may I?"

Mrs. Lockwood took off the spectacles she was wearing, passed her hands over her forehead and eyes, and answered quietly, "Pray speak."

Her manner was not tender nor encouraging, nor even very cordial; but it nerved Maud better than a too great show of feeling would have done. In a few words she told Mrs. Lockwood what Mr. Frost had said to her at the Lovegroves' about his journey to Italy, and so forth.

"Now what I wanted to ask you was this," said Maud: "You know Mr. Frost well, and I do not: do you suppose he had any special motive in saying all this to me, a total stranger?"

"Any special motive?" repeated Mrs. Lockwood, reddening, and looking, for her, singularly embarrassed.

"I mean—what I mean is this, Mrs. Lockwood: the story of the great sorrow and affliction that has befallen the home that was my home from the time I was a

little child until the other day, is known to you. I am afraid—that is, no doubt it is known to many, many other people. Is Mr. Frost one of those who know it? And did he mean to learn anything or tell anything about Veronica when he spoke to me of going to Italy?"

"Oh!" said Mrs. Lockwood, drawing a long breath and then covering her mouth with one white, delicate hand. "You were not thinking of yourself, then, Miss Desmond?"

"Of myself? What could Mr. Frost's plans be to me, or why should he care that I should know them?"

"It was of Hugh he spoke, I thought."

"Ah yes; but incidentally almost. He spoke to me as of something that it concerned me to know! I think of Veronica so constantly, and I am obliged to lock my thoughts up from Aunt Hilda so jealously, that perhaps I grow morbid. But I thought you would forgive my speaking to you."

"As to Mr. Frost, I can answer you in two words. He knows from the Lovegroves that you have left Mr. Levincourt's house because his daughter ran away under particularly painful circumstances. But if your aunt has been discreet" (it was a large "if," and Zillah plainly showed that she knew it was so), "neither the Lovegroves nor Mr. Frost know the name of the man she ran away with. It has been a subject of gossip, truly, but not in the circles of society where the Lovegroves move. Sir John Gale has lived so long out of England, that he is almost forgotten."

"Thank you, Mrs. Lockwood," said Maud, absently.

"I infer from what you say that you have some reason to believe that your guardian's daughter is at present in Italy?"

"Oh, yes, I forgot that you did not know. I—I had a letter from her."

Mrs. Lockwood raised her eyebrows, and looked at Maud attentively.

"I know I can trust you not to mention this to my aunt. You understand how impossible it is for me to speak of Veronica to her. Aunt Hilda is kind and gentle, and yet, on that subject, she speaks with a harshness that is very painful to me."

"Lady Tallis has been infamously treated."

"You must understand, if you please, Mrs. Lockwood, that I have told Mr. Levincourt of my letter. It is only a secret from Aunt Hilda."

"You were very fond of this young lady?" said Zillah, with her eyes observantly fixed on Maud's changing face.

"Yes," answered Maud. Then the tears gathered to her eyes, and for the moment she could say no more.

"Your fondness has not been destroyed by this miserable business?" pursued Zillah.

Maud silently shook her head, and the tears fell faster.

"Would you see her and speak to her again if you could? Would you hold out your hand to her?"

Mrs. Lockwood, as she spoke, kept her mouth concealed beneath her hand, and her eyes on Maud's face.

Maud was aware of a certain constraint in the elder woman's tone. She thought it sounded disapproving, almost stern.

"Oh, Mrs. Lockwood," she cried, in much agitation, "do not judge her too hardly! You have such a lofty standard of duty; your son has told me how excellent your life has been; he is so proud of you! But do not be too hard on her. If the good have no pity for her, what will become of her? I do not defend her. She failed in her duty towards her father; but she has been most basely and cruelly deceived, I am sure of it!"

"Deceived by her great love and faith in this man?" said Zillah, unwaveringly preserving the same look and attitude.

Maud grew very pale, and drooped her head. "She—she—trusted him," she murmured.

Zillah removed her hand from her mouth, and, clasping both hands, rested them on the table before her. When her mouth was no longer concealed, she cast her eyes down, and ceased to look at Maud while she spoke.

"See now, Miss Desmond," said she, in her soft voice, "how unequally justice is meted out in this world! Once I knew a girl—little more than a child in years—very ignorant, very unprotected, and very confiding. She was not a handsome haughty young lady, living in a respectable home. This girl's associates were all low, vile people. She was not by nature vicious or wicked, but she loved with her whole childish inexperienced heart, and she fell. She was 'most basely and cruelly deceived'—I quote your words. It was neither vanity nor vainglory that led her astray: nothing but simple, blind, misplaced affection. Well, nobody pitied her, nobody cared for her, nobody helped her.

If you, or any delicately nurtured young lady like you, had met her in the street, you would have drawn your garments away from the contamination of her touch."

"No, no, no! Indeed you wrong me! If I had known her story I should have pitied her from the bottom of my heart."

Zillah proceeded without heeding the interruption. "And all her sufferings—they were acute—I knew her very well—could not atone. Her fault (I use the word for want of a better. Where *fault* lay, God knows—perhaps He cares!)——"

"Oh Mrs. Lockwood!"

"Do I shock you? That girl's fault pursued her through life—still pursues her——"

"Is she alive?"

"Alive? No: I think she is dead, that girl. Her ghost walks sometimes. But another woman, in some respects a very different woman, inherits her legacy of trouble and shame and sorrow. That seems hard. But if you tell me that all life is hard; that we are blind to what is our bane or what our good; or utter any other fatalist doctrine, I can understand the reason and sequence of it. But when you preach to me that 'Conduct makes Fate,' that as we reap we sow; and so forth; I point to these two cases. The one an innocent—yes; an *innocent*—child: the other a well-educated, proud, beautiful, beloved, young woman. The loving-hearted child is crushed and tortured and forsaken. The—forgive me, but I speak what you *know* to be true—the selfish, vain, arrogant, ambitious lady, commits the same sin against the world, and is rich, petted, and pampered. The rough places are made smooth for her feet. People cry 'How sad! A lady! The daughter of a clergyman!' Her friends hold out their hands to take her back. Even you—a pure, fresh, young creature like you—are ready to mourn over her, and to forgive her and caress her with angelic sweetness and pity."

Maud could not help perceiving, that Mrs. Lockwood was mentally visiting on Veronica the hard usage of the poor betrayed young girl she had spoken of. It seemed as though in proportion to the pity that she felt for that young girl, she grudged every pitying word that was bestowed on Veronica. Maud felt it very strange that it should be so: and she had almost a sense of guilt herself, for having become aware of it. But her intellect was too clear for self-delusion, and, albeit most unwillingly, she could not but understand the spirit of

Mrs. Lockwood's words, and be repulsed by it.

"I think—" said Maud, gently, and turning her pale face full on Mrs. Lockwood: "I am young and inexperienced I know, but I do think that having loved one suffering person very much should make us tender to other sufferers."

"Sufferers!" repeated Mrs. Lockwood, with a cold contempt, and closed her mouth rigidly when she had spoken.

"Yea," answered Maud, firmly. The colour rose very faintly in her cheek and her blue eyes shone. "My unhappy friend is a sufferer. Not the less a sufferer because there is truth in some of the words you have applied to her. Pride and ambition do not soften such a fall as hers."

Again Maud could not help perceiving that Mrs. Lockwood was balancing Veronica's fate against the fate of the betrayed young girl: and that she derived a strange satisfaction from the suggestion that Veronica's haughty spirit could be tortured by humiliation.

"There would be a grain of something like justice in that," said Zillah, under her breath.

Maud withdrew with a pained feeling. Her mind had at first been relieved by the mere fact of uttering the name of one who dwelt so constantly in her thoughts. But Mrs. Lockwood's manner had so repulsed her that she inwardly resolved never again to approach the subject of Veronica's fate in speaking to her. But to her surprise, the topic seemed to have a mysterious attraction for Mrs. Lockwood. Whenever she found herself alone with Maud, she was sure, sooner or later to come round to it.

Once she said, after a long pause of silence during which her fingers were busied with needlework and her eyes cast down on it, "If that poor young girl—she is dead now, you know—could have had a friend like you, Miss Desmond, years and years ago, it might have gone differently with her. It would have given her courage to know that such a pure-hearted woman pitied rather than blamed her."

"I should think all honest hearts must be filled with compassion at her story," answered Maud, in a low voice.

"Do you think a man's heart would be? Do you think that, for instance, my—my son's would be?"

"Surely! Can you doubt it?"

"Poor girl! She was so ignorant of the world! She knew there was a great

gulf between her and such as you are. She had never lived with good people. They were as distant from her as the inhabitants of the moon might be. If she had had a friend like you, Miss Desmond, that poor girl who is dead, it would have given her courage, and it might have gone differently with her."

AS THE CROW FLIES.

DUE NORTH. PETERBOROUGH AND FOTHERINGAY.

THE crow, leaving a sluggish express train behind him (a mere tortoise in the race) with one contemptuous flap of his jet black wings, alights on one of the massy grey western towers of Peterborough Cathedral. From above those three great cavernous porches that give shadow to the old west front, he looks over a sea of green pasture and the cane-coloured stubble and rich chocolate-brown arable over which William and his mailed conquerors, chanting of Roland and Roncevalles, of proud Paynim and Christian champions "militant here on earth," and fresh from scorched and bleeding Yorkshire and Durham, bore down on Ely, whose fens and morasses the Saxons still held against the savage Norman. Hereward, the son of the Saxon lord of Bourn, in Lincolnshire, had built a stockade in the Island of Ely, where he erected his standard and defied the Norman bowmen. An exile in Flanders, banished in youth for treasonable turbulence by Edward the Confessor, Hereward, on learning that his father was dead, and that a Norman robber had expelled his mother from the fair lands of Bourn, returned to England, rallied his warlike tenantry, drove out the intruder, and organised a small guerilla army—like the stout-hearted Saxon Garibaldi that he was. His uncle Brand, abbot of Peterborough, knighted the brave chieftain. At Brand's death in 1069, William gave the abbey (as dangerous a gift as a cask of gunpowder) to Turol, a foreign monk, who rode into Northamptonshire in the centre of one hundred and sixty spearmen. It was an ill-omened moment, for a red light rose in the northern sky at the new abbot's approach. That fire arose from the flaming town of Peterborough. The Danes had poured down from the Humber to the west, and Sbern their chief had joined Hereward, who was sweeping now like a resistless deluge over the marsh country. The abbey was burnt, the golden chalices and patens melted and gone, before Turol, pale and scared, rode

over the still hot ashes of his new domain, just as proud Hereward retired to the fort at Ely, and the Dane's black sails were fast fading away towards the Baltic.

Poor Turolde, he had a wolf to trap, and he went out as if he were looking for a rabbit. What did he do, good man, but go to Tailbois, a neighbour of his, the new Norman lord of Hoyland, who brought him cavalry to surprise Hereward and his Saxon outlaws. One day, while Tailbois and his vanguard were riding gallantly along a dangerous part of the fen land, close to the side of a forest, dark and impenetrable by cavalry, Hereward and his woodmen sprang out on the rear, where Turolde ambled, singing his Ave Marias, and bore him off to a damp corner of the wooden fort, from which he emerged after many days, rheumatic, soured, and poorer by two thousand pounds. William, at this, roused like a lion from sleep, for many Scotch exiles had now joined Hereward, who grew daily more confident, and more dangerous. He slowly closed in on Hereward, Norman ships barricaded the outlets from the west, spearmen gathered closer and closer upon the fortress of the fens. William built solid roads across the fens, and bridged the rushing channels, all the while harassed and tormented by Hereward's swooping forays. Heavy fell the Saxon axes, time after time, on the Norman hewers and delvers. "Satan helps the Saxon boors!" cried the wounded diggers; so William, to please them, had a wooden tower built, in which a Norman sorceress was placed to exorcise Hereward and his guerillas; but one day, when the wind blew right, the Saxons set fire to half a mile of reeds, and tower, witch, and Norman workmen passed away in a gust of flame. But neither steel nor fire could turn the Conqueror. Faster grew the solid roads, faster sprang the arches of fresh bridges, till nearly all Ely was his. Then Hereward, refusing to surrender, escaped over the marshes into the forest, and from there renewed his forays; but the rest lost heart, and laid down their arms before the Normans. Morcar and the Bishop of Durham were thrown into prison for life, and other leaders lost eyes, hands, or feet, according to William's cruel caprices over his wine; but the brave man fared after all better than the colder-hearted, for William respected his courage, and restored him the lands of Bauru, on his taking an oath of allegiance. Hereward was the last Saxon to sheath the sword against the Norman.

Great monasteries arose of old time among the fens and marshes of this amphibious part of England. The old rhyming proverb sums them up graphically:

Romsey, the rich of gold and fee,
Thorney, the flower of many fair tree,
Crowland, the courteous of their meat and drink,
Spalding, the gluttons as all men do think,
PETERBOROUGH THE PROUD.
Santrey, by the way, that old abbey
Gave more alms in one day than all they.

Peterborough has had to bear its rubs and was burnt by the howling Danes in 870, when all the monks were butchered in the flames; again in 1069, according to a prophecy of Egelric, a Bishop of Durham, who had turned hermit; again in 1116, for the sins of Abbot de Leez and his brother, who had invoked the devil of fire; lastly it was in danger in 1264, when the Abbot of Peterborough, having joined the rebellious barons, down the abbey would have gone, broken like a china jar, had not the abbot turned away the wrath of King Henry the Third by a heavy ransom.

Cromwell's Ironsides laid their hands very heavily on Peterborough, whose old ill-luck broke out again with great severity during the civil wars. The Calvinists, with musket and sword, and pick and axe, destroyed the reredos, the chapter house, cloisters, and palace, shattering the emblazoned glass, "red with the blood of martyrs and of saints" with cruel carelessness. They stripped off all the lead of the roofs and sent it for sale to Holland, but a storm waited for the sacrilegious bark and sunk it. They finally pulled down the Lady Chapel to save the expense of repairs, and turned the old house of God into a workshop.

Some great people lie under Peterborough pavement. Poor Queen Katherine came here from Kimbolton, as our readers know; and in the nave lies old Scarlet (ninety-eight years old), the sexton, who buried Katherine and Mary Queen of Scots, too, and, for the matter of that, all the population of Peterborough twice over. "A king of spades," indeed, as his last chronicler pithily observes. Queen Katherine lies on the north side of the choir, and under a doorway out of the choir on the south side once reposed Mary. It brings a moisture into most eyes to think of the last hour of the unhappy Queen of Scots. We seem to see her now, as she rises from the altar in her oratory, and, taking down the ivory crucifix, passes into the ante-chamber where the four hard-faced earls await her. She wears a gown of black satin, with a long

veil of white linen fastened to her hair, and her chaplet of beads is by her side. Then comes a very touching little episode in the last scene of all. Suddenly an old servant of hers, Sir Robert Melville, her house-steward, falls on his knees weeping passionately, being heart-broken at having to bear such sorrowful news to Scotland.

"Good Melville," said the queen, with placid dignity and gentleness, "cease to lament, but rather rejoice, for thou shalt now see a final period to Mary Stuart's troubles. The world, my servant, is all but vanity, and subject to more sorrow than an ocean of tears can wash away. But I pray thee take this message when thou goest: that I die true to my religion, to Scotland, and to France. God forgive them that have thirsted for my blood as the hart longeth for the water brooks! Commend me to my son, and tell him I have done nothing to prejudice the kingdom of Scotland."

Melville sobbed, and could not utter a word. Mary stooped, turned to the faithful old servitor, and weeping, also, herself, said:

"Once more farewell, good Melville: pray for thy mistress and queen."

She then requested the four earls to treat her servants with kindness, and to allow them to stand by her at her death. The Earl of Kent, hard and icily fanatical, objected, however, saying it would be troublesome to her majesty and unpleasant to the company; besides, as Papists, the servants would be sure to put in practice some superstitious trumpery, such as dipping handkerchiefs in her grace's blood.

"My lords," said Mary, "I will give you my word they shall deserve no blame, nor do such thing as you mention; but, poor souls, it would do them good to see the last of their mistress; and I hope your mistress, as a maiden queen, would not deny me in regard of womanhood, to have some of my women about me at my death. Surely you might grant a greater favour than this, though I were a woman of less rank than the Queen of Scots."

The lords reluctantly consented, and poor old Sir Robert Melville the steward, the apothecary, the surgeon, and Kennedy and Curle, two of her maids, followed Mary to the scaffold, the sheriff and his officers leading, Sir Amyas Paulet and Sir Drew Drury following, and after them coming the Earls of Shrewsbury and Kent. The scaffold, which stood in the hall, was a railed-in platform, three feet high, and covered with black cloth. On

it stood a low stool, a cushion, and the block, all covered with black. By the horrible block, axe in hand, stood the headsman from the Tower, dressed in sable velvet, and his assistant. Mary, with no change of face, and no tremor, sat down cheerfully, while Beale, the clerk of the council, read the death-warrant aloud; as he concluded, the spectators cried out, "God save Queen Elizabeth!" Mary said but little, only asserting that she was a princess not subject to the laws of England, declaring that she had never sought the life of Elizabeth, and that from her heart she pardoned all her enemies. The Dean of Peterborough then stood up and preached to her the necessity of conversion, his gracious mistress being most anxious for the welfare of her soul. Mary replied firmly and scornfully:

"Mr. Dean, trouble not yourself; I am fixed in the ancient religion, and by God's grace I will shed my blood for it." So saying, she turned away, but the dean went on again, till the Earl of Shrewsbury set him to begin a prayer: all this time Mary repeated with fervour the Penitential psalms in Latin, and then, when the dean became silent, she prayed aloud in English for the Church, her unworthy son, and Queen Elizabeth. She then kissed the crucifix she held, and exclaimed:

"As thy arms, O Jesus, were stretched upon the cross, so receive me, O God, into the arms of mercy."

"Madam," said the fanatical Earl of Kent, reproachfully, "you had better put such Popish trumpery out of your hand and carry Christ in your heart."

Mary replied: "I can hardly bear this emblem in my hand without at the same time bearing Him in my heart."

The two executioners then came forward and kneeling before the queen, prayed her forgiveness. Her women began to disrobe her, but the executioners, nervously hurrying, stepped forward to pull off her veil and ruff, and Mary said to the earls, as if apologetically at the delay:

"I am not used to be undressed by such attendants, or to put off my clothes before such a company."

At this little playfulness the servants burst into loud sobs and into tears; but Mary calmly put her finger to her lips to hush them, kissed them all again, and bade them pray for her. The maid Kennedy then took a handkerchief edged with gold and bound her eyes. The two grim men in black then led her to the block, and

Mary knelt on the black cushion, and resting her head calmly on the block, exclaimed:

"Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit."

The servants burst forth again with groans and sobs, and the axe fell. Faintly and tremblingly, however, the ruffian struck, for he had to give three blows before he cut through the thin, white neck. Then when the fair head fell on the sounding planks, the man raised it, and holding it at arm's length, exclaimed:

"God save Queen Elizabeth!"

The Earl of Kent, stepping to the headless body said, in a loud voice, "So perish all the enemies of the queen's gospel!"

But no one said Amen, to that cruel wish. When the executioner raised the body the queen's little pet dog was found nestling under the black gown, and after being once forced away, more faithful than many a courtier, it went and lay down sorrowfully between the head and the body. Thus perished Mary after forty-five years' sorrow in this troublesome world.

King James, driven by mere filial decency, removed the body of his mother from Peterborough choir, but not till nine years after his accession. The prophetic Northamptonshire saying at the time was:

"Stuart shall not prosper, since the dead have been moved in their grave."

Mary now rests under a rich canopied tomb in Westminster Abbey, where her fair cousin, "a little more than kin, and less than kind," also lies. If an impartial person from this side of the Tweed, looks at the two faces, he will, the crow surmises, pronounce Elizabeth's the handsomer, in spite of all the romance that has accumulated over the grave of this fair but false Queen Mary.

Peterborough is proud of that honest, staunch old divine, Paley, who was born there in 1743, his father being a minor canon that summer in residence. In person the prebend of Carlisle was a short podgy man, with clever bushy brows, a snub nose, and projecting teeth. He always wore a white wig and a court coat, detesting cassocks, which he used to say were just like the black aprons the master tailors wore at Durham. His gait was awkward, his action ungraceful, his dialect coarsely provincial; but his arch smile was delightful and redeemed all. He seems to have been a warm-hearted, kind, sensible man, with a horror of professional humbug and, indeed, of all hypocrisy and false pretence. Some of his hearty common-sense sayings

were very happy. Once, at the Hyson Club, a Liberal association, at Cambridge, he had to give his reasons for advocating "braibery and corroption." "Why," said he, laughing, "no one is so *mad* as to wish to be governed by force, and no one is such a *fool* as to expect to be governed by virtue; so, what remains, tell me, but 'braibery and corroption'?" He was on principle slow to pay debts. "Never paay mooney," he used to say, "till you can't help it; *soomething maay* happen." On the other hand, being really frugal and thrifty, he always made his wife and daughters pay ready money at Carlisle. "It's of no use," he used to say, with a patient shrug, "to desire the women to buy only what they want; they will always imagine they want what they wish to buy; but that paying ready *mooney* is such a check upon their imagination." This worthy north-country divine used to give admirable sketches of his early life, when he was a poor, hopeless, second usher at a Greenwich school. "I flattered my imagination when I first went to town," he used to say, "with the pleasure of 'teaching the young idea how to shoot.' I entered a very offensive room, and a little boy came up as soon as I was seated, and began: 'B-a-b, bab, b-l-e, ble, babble.' Wanting a waistcoat, I went into a second-hand clothes shop, and it so chanced I bought the very identical garment Lord Clive wore when he made his triumphal entry into Calcutta. I then went to a play, and on coming out found six simultaneous hands all trying to pick my pockets. Whether they were rival or conspiring hands I cannot say. They took from me a handkerchief not worth twopence. I felt quite sorry for the disappointment of the poor scoundrels." Paley was passionately fond of angling, and made Romney paint him with a rod in his hand. Although always riding about his parishes in a good Vicar-of-Wakefield sort of way, Paley was always a slovenly and clumsy rider. "When I followed my father on a pony, on my first journey to Cambridge, he used to say, humorously, 'I fell off seven times.' Every time my father heard a thump, he would turn round, and calmly say, with his head half aside, 'Take care of thy money, lad.' I am so bad a horseman, indeed," he continued, "that if any person at all comes near me when I am riding I certainly have a fall. Company takes off my attention, and I have need of all I can command to manage my horse, though it

is the quietest creature that ever lived; and at Carlisle used to be often covered with children from the ears to the tail." The north-country clergy were in Paley's time, like Parson Adams, very poor, frequently being farmers, sometimes being publicans, and very often being sinners. "I know a great many parishes," Paley once said, "to which I could take you, and if the whole population were to pass in review before you, you would not be able to tell which was the parson. I know him by certain signs that I have learned by long practice: he has usually a black silk handkerchief round his neck, and he is always the greasiest man in the parish except the butcher." Paley was fond of good eating, and once when asked what he would eat, replied, "Eat, madam?—eat everything, from the top of the table to the bottom." Another time he declared he should eat of every course, but he stuck at some irrelevant pork steaks. "I had intended," he said, regretfully, "to have proceeded regularly and systematically through the ham and fowl, to the beef, but those pork steaks staggered my system."

AMÉLIE-LES-BAINS.

ONE of the latest claimants to be especially selected as a winter residence for invalids is a village in the Oriental Pyrenees, now a small town, called Amélie-les-Bains. Dr. Génieys, the government medical inspector there, recommends Pau for sanguine nervous patients, predisposed to active fluxions; Mentone and Villefranche (Villafranca, close to Nice), to patients who require to breathe a warm and saline atmosphere; Nice, Cannes, Hyères, and Montpellier, to patients who are able to support without danger, a sharp and tonic reaction; Amélie-les-Bains to lymphatic and weakened patients, who want to acquire tone without excitement—an opinion which, if not over-intelligible to the laity, is at least official.

Of the south of Europe an erroneous idea is popularly entertained. The absence or brief duration of frost and snow do not suffice to constitute an earthly paradise. High, often cutting, winds, are the plague of the south, as fogs and drizzling rains are of the north. Where rain does not fall in summer, for three, four, even five, months together, intolerable dust is the result. Some time in autumn there are very heavy rains, which last a fortnight or three weeks. In winter, though the sky be blue and cloudless, and the midday sunshine warm and bright, the mornings and evenings are cold and treacherous. A particular danger against which strangers are urgently warned, is the chill which immediately follows the setting of the sun, or his sudden eclipse behind a mountain. It is an enormous mistake to suppose that in the south of France it is always warm.

Too hopeful travellers should be apprised of what they have to expect. Even enthusiastic advocates of Amélie admit that, in winter, there is always a fortnight that is hard to bear, in consequence of fickle, sharp, or rainy weather. This trying period occurs sometimes in January, sometimes in February, sometimes in March, and even in April; the only thing certain about it is, that there is no escaping it. Otherwise, the winter advantages offered are, a drier atmosphere, clear of fogs and mists, fifteen or twenty degrees of Fahrenheit warmer than in the north. Also the possibility of getting out several hours in the middle of the day, five times a week, when invalids at home would be obliged to keep indoors for weeks together.

The spring is less agreeable than the winter, being subject to winds which, here, are only disagreeable; whereas elsewhere, as at Avignon and throughout almost all Dauphiny and Provence, they are marrow-piercing, insufferable, irresistible. Remember, too, that not only is firing dear, but, where English colonies have not been for some time established, fire-places are scanty and ineffectual: the use of fire being supposed to be to cook food, not to warm apartments. There are real grounds for the knowing advice to spend summer in a warm, and winter in a cold climate; because in the one you will find old-established precautions against heat, and in the other appliances to keep out cold.

Although snugly ensconced among the hills, the summer's heat at Amélie is only oppressive from eight in the morning until noon. A sea-breeze then sets in, cooling the whole valley of the Tech upward, from the point where it falls into the Mediterranean, which is only nineteen miles distant, as the crow flies. By climbing the heights at the back of the town, the Fort-les-Bains, or almost any of the neighbouring mountains, you catch sight of the sea in the far horizon. Until the reign of Louis Philippe the place was known as Bains-sur-Tech. Whether for precision, or out of compliment to Louis Philippe's queen, it took, and retains, the title of Amélie-les-Bains, or simple Amélie for short.

But its great attraction and its increasing prosperity have arisen from its being at once a winter refuge and a Pyrenean thermal station. It is the lowest of all those stations in point of altitude, being no more than some seven hundred feet above the level of the sea; whereas its only rival for a winter treatment by the waters, Le Vernet, stands at an elevation of nearly two thousand, and amidst a mass of mountains which must greatly lower its average temperature, by attracting mists, rains, and gusts of wind. Vernet-les-Bains is therefore the summer resort in the Oriental Pyrenees for invalids and for the multitude of hard-workers who need rest and change, while Amélie is their nook for hybernation.

Still, people can, and do, go to Le Vernet in winter. A patriotic doctor, Lallemand of Montpellier, cured Ibrahim Facha there of a

very bad cold which he had caught in the Lebanon. The cure was effectual, and the fame of Le Vernet established—for a time. It has now dropped probably to its just estimation, as a very interesting (to the botanist, geologist, and hill-climber), pleasant, and health-giving summer sojourn. Other places of outbreak of thermal springs are closed in winter, either by the invasion of snow, or the desertion of fashion. Barèges, to whose waters great virtue is attributed, possesses a detestable, almost Siberian, climate. Even in the height of summer, the variations of temperature are enormous; in winter, the place is utterly deserted, and a part of its only street consists of wooden booths, taken down every autumn to let the avalanches have their own way. That bit of the village was once protected by a wood, since cut down for firing. Iron stakes have been planted instead; but they only led to the discovery that poles of iron are not fir-trees.

The writers visited Amélie in June, all of us requiring climate rather than waters, and knowing that, if we found it too hot there, we could easily shift to Le Vernet, or elsewhere. But it was only pleasantly warm; so we made a stay. (Remember that, in the course of last June, a damp and chilly spell came, like a wet blanket, over the whole of Great Britain, France, and probably over other parts of Europe.) From a summer visit I infer its winter climate on these grounds: The hedges are gay with scarlet pomegranate blossoms, interspersed here and there with tufts of American aloes. The rocks, wherever water trickles over them, are luxuriantly festooned with *true* maidens' hair fern, *Adiantum capillus Veneris*, and in certain chinks we find the fountain spleenwort. That handsome and curious-tempered plant, the tree mallow (which follows the line of coast from the north of Scotland to the south of England, but refuses to thrive in midland situations), puts forth here its small-leaved flowering branches (before flowering, the leaves are large), and ripens seed by pecksful. In the gardens are tall castor-oil plants, which must have passed the winter somewhere; and the town, I believe, no more possesses a greenhouse, than it does (known to civilians) a map of Europe. The eucalyptus, and several Australian acacias, are trees. The small-leaved rose, *R. microphylla*, blooms abundantly, as do the evergreen Japan spindle trees, *euonymus*, both plain-leaved and variegated. The olive climbs the sunny slopes to a considerable height above the town; the vine (which, however, is no test of winter climate) produces wine a good deal higher. The orange-tree, not cultivated either for flowers to flavour perfumes and confectionery, or for fruit to contract your mouth like alum, still grows, as an ornamental shrub, in sheltered nooks, and bears golden balls which are real oranges. Where such things are, the winter can be neither very severe nor very damp; some of those plants would be frozen, while others would not. For the rest, they are not spoiled by over-gardening.

What will grow of itself, without much care, is stuck in the ground, and that is all. There is not even a gardener in the place who sells plants, or rears and propagates plants for sale. Nevertheless, there are frequent waterings, principally by irrigation, as rain falls rarely, and then not abundantly; the field crops, too, are hoed; and the stony soil, in which the vines grow, is kept clear of weeds.

Besides the many pretty shrubs which, with us, have to pass the winter in greenhouses, the gardens display, grouped with arbutuses, both single and double-flowered oleanders. A variety of the latter, with single white flowers, produces a charming effect in contrast with the pink. The mountain-sides in the neighbourhood, not blessed with aspects suitable for vines and olives—Ireland is the only country in which you can have a garden with a south wall all the way round it—are principally covered with chestnut-copses, which, when in bloom, diffuse a sickening odour. Every six years or so, they are cut down to the ground for making the hoops which hold wine-casks together. Higher up, betwixt boulders, and in uncultivable spots, grows the tall Mediterranean heath, whose stumpy roots are grubbed up, to be carved into pipes now in fashion. While we poked along the mule-paths for unaccustomed plants and flowers, there came upon us, noiselessly, three men with sandalled feet, naked legs, crimson-sashed waists, and red cloth caps hanging over on one side, surmounted each with a sackful of heath-roots, for the use of native artists or for exportation. After an interval, followed three Catalan mules, trailing their hind feet down the steep descent, bearing *their* burden—charcoal, burnt aloft, for the use of cooks and blacksmiths.

But besides the climate, and the perfumed strawberries, and the little St. John's apricots, and the early French beans, we also came in quest of the waters, to coax back, to one of us, a missing voice, and to frighten away from another happily-absent rheumatism and gout; for we had already found Pyrenean springs not only a remedy but a prophylactic. Now I have a theory of my own about these thermal waters, which the reader may deride and demolish, if he will.

Not long ago, heat was caloric, a simple fluid, and nothing more. A ray of sunshine, too, was a ray of sunshine, and nothing more, until Newton dissected it. Since then, we have discovered that there are invisible rays beyond those which his prismatic spectrum shows us. Moreover, we find that the dissected rays in his spectrum are endowed with different qualities; there are rays which induce chemical action, rays which convey heat, rays which excite seeds and plants to germinate and sprout. It would be great presumption in any one to say that we are at present cognisant of all the qualities of all the rays, seen and unseen, which radiate from the sun. They doubtless exert influences which we are as yet, and may perhaps remain, unable to trace. The same of heat,

now that we can scarcely doubt that heat, instead of being a fluid, is a motion; now that we learn, from the monogenesis and convertibility of physical forces—excuse the hard words, but I know of none clearer—that heat may become light, magnetism, and the rest; and vice versa, that each is convertible into the other; it may be assumed that the heat of ordinary life, with which we are familiar, is also possessed of unknown influences.

Those influences, however, both known and unknown, are limited; they have the qualities which naturally belong to them, and no more. But the heat which we meet with, in the course of our daily life, is all derived, directly or indirectly, from the sun. A coal fire is the sun's rays stored in fossil vegetables; a peat, wood, or charcoal fire, is the same fixed by plants of more recent date. They are all the products of the sun; and what that great luminary has not shot into them, they cannot give out.

Now, assuming the theory of the central heat, and that the earth on which we walk is only a sort of egg-shell, enclosing a mass of molten, semi-liquid, and liquid materials; assuming La Place's theory of the nebular origin of the Solar system: that the planets, including the earth, result from zones successively thrown off, condensing first into little suns, and then cooling into planets, while the great big central lump of the sun, after gathering himself together, remains what he is: assuming this, we may further speculate that the outer zones of the nebula did not consist of exactly the same materials as the central mass. There are diversities in the constitution of the fixed stars, diversities in the constitution of the planets of our system, and doubtless diversities in the constitution of the earth and the sun. Consequently, earth-heat is probably endowed with different properties from sun-heat.

The properties of earth-heat, genuine and unadulterated, as it was when originally detached from the grand solar nebula, are most easily obtainable by the use of thermal waters, i.e., the mineral waters which have issued *hot* from the earth, from time immemorial. No region of the civilised world is richer in these than the Pyrenean chain. There are mineral waters which are not thermal, and are therefore not gifted with the mysterious, unspecified, and, if you will, supposed, properties of earth-heat. Sea-water is true mineral water: especially that of the Mediterranean and other highly-salted and extra-bitter seas. Heat those waters, and you get hot mineral waters; but, I hold, that you do not get true thermal waters; because they are heated by fire, which is the same as sun-heat, instead of by true unsophisticated earth-heat. Note that there is a minor sort of earth-heat, known to horticulturists as geothermal heat, which preserves plunged plants and sunk greenhouses from suffering from severe cold in winter. This, if partly derived from true earth-heat, is probably mainly derived from an equilibrium in the distribution of the heat conveyed to the earth's surface by the rays of the sun.

When you have destroyed my notions about the difference in the qualities of true earth-heat and of sun-heat, there remain the facts, that thermal waters are very curious things to have dealings with; that they are dangerous to tamper with, and that it is practical folly to play with them. It may be said that medical men insist on this from motives of interest, and so frighten patients into payment of fees. It may be so, in certain instances. But medical men of the highest honour give the very same warning, which is supported by the general tradition and belief of the country. And be it remembered that the Pyrenean chain is not a mere spot, nor inhabited by a single race of men.

Visitors to the Pyrenees have often remarked that, while among them, they experience a sort of electrical influence, especially in the neighbourhood of the thermal springs. I have felt this myself. It is like the presentiment of a thunderstorm: which, however, does not come. Here, hot water breaks forth at many points. It is people's own fault if they are not clean. A fountain in the street, hard by, has two jets, one hot, the other cold. When we want warm water to wash with, we have it fetched, not from the kitchen, but from a spring steaming at the back of the house. These springs, running incessantly and abundantly, cannot be without effect.

Amélie-les-Bains has become what it is entirely through the exertions of one Dr. Pujade, now eighty-five years of age, and in good health. The earth gave him the springs and the situation; he did the rest. Once, when an inhabitant of Bains-sur-Tech caught a five-franc piece, he crossed himself, knowing it would be long before he saw another. Now, thanks to the doctor's Thermes—a boarding-house and thermal establishment combined—strangers have made money more plentiful. Houses, chalets, and châteaux, are building in all directions; for ourselves, we have only to breathe, bathe, and bask. There are plenty of lodgings to let; but we favoured the venerable doctor with our patronage, not to mention the convenience (thermal sources being under the same roof) of going to our bath or douche in our dressing-gown and slippers. There is also a pulverisation of the water by a curious mechanical process, for inhalation by weak larynxes, and a "piscine," or hot swimming-bath, partly hollowed out in the native rock, which can be emptied in a few minutes, and refilled in a couple of hours. The temperature of this, and the vapours from it, make it a perfect sudatorium or perspiring hall. The establishment is perched at the mouth of a gorge, opening into a sort of Happy Valley on a largish scale, and with the possibility of escaping from it. On the heights overhead hang mighty lumps of stone. Romantic walks among the rocks are traced around it, greatly exciting the hopes of fern-hunters. There are plenty of picturesque shady alleys; not our thick shade of beeches and hornbeams, but the flickering,

luminous, chequered shade, which Milton thought the fit dancing-place for "many a maid"—the shade of plane and pomegranate trees, of althæas, and ilexes. The first morning, on stepping out of doors before breakfast, we laid hands on the black spleen-wort and other old friends, in quantity, some, as the vulgar polypody, a little shrivelled with the drought and the heat; but we fear that, for greater varieties, we shall have to climb. So be it. If we must, we must.

For six francs (say five shillings) per head, per day, we have comfortably furnished bedrooms, commanding a charming view, and two meals: a knife-and-fork breakfast at half-past ten, and dinner at half-past five—of course at the table d'hôte.

We lead a sort of French country-house life, without the trouble of housekeeping: every one doing much as he lists; the main duty is punctuality at meal times, the infringement of which brings with it its own punishment. Meals, however, are obligingly served at other than meal times, when occasion really calls for them. Thermal appliances are entirely left to private discretion or medical advice. For those who inhabit the actual building in which the baths, &c., are situated, we are told that the atmosphere is so highly charged with emanations from the springs, that a mere residence therein is often remedial without absorbing the waters themselves in any shape. In all cases, as we have stated, it is wise to employ them with great caution when not under medical supervision, and even with it. Some complain of the number of invalids met in their daily walks and frequentations. The sight, if painful, is a wholesome reminder which ought to convey its lessons of moderation and charity. Besides, has nobody a right to be ill besides ourselves and ours? The same spectacle, on a larger scale, is to be seen at all resorts of sickly constitutions—at Hyères, Cannes, Nice, and Mentone. The same markets attract the same customers. No lunch or supper are given, nor are they needed for the strong; the weak can ask for ante-prandial sustenance, interpreted to mean cups of broth or consommé. The general beverage, the wine grown on the hills around, is wholesome but heady. Beer is to be had at the cafés, where wine is "low;" the strong sweet wines of Roussillon are procurable at the wine shops, principally frequented by working people and private soldiers. Bowls of morning milk, wines in bottle, liqueurs, bottled mineral waters from distant springs, baths, douches, pulverisations, &c., are extras at the establishment.

On our way to Amélie the imposing mass of the famous Canigou rose before us. There were still patches of snow clinging to its summit, which was capped by a substantial bonnet of clouds. (The line of persistent snow, please recollect, is considerably higher at the Pyrenees than amongst the Alps.) We are told that its ascent is not difficult, being frequently accomplished by ladies, who can ride on mules to within three-quarters of an hour of the top.

Perhaps we shall one day make the attempt, after looking at it twice. Oh, if I only had my legs of thirty, nay, twenty years ago! But courage; they still are serviceable. And perhaps, here, the Waters of Youth will do what they have never done before—arrest the course of time, and annihilate the effects of wear and tear. And thus it is; elderlies strive not to grow older, while young people cannot conceive that they shall ever be old. Age and infirmity seem wrongs inflicted upon us; when they come, we look upon ourselves as injured males and females; it is shameful treatment on the part of nature. Paralytic patients indignantly quit Amélie-les-Bains, because they are not completely cured in a fortnight. Fortunately for those tormented by vain regrets, in consequence of the Thermes being situated in a hollow, the Canigou is not visible from their windows, to tease them by whispering, "Mount me, if you can." But a little easy climbing allows us to catch sight of its majestic mass in one direction, and in the other of the Mediterranean.

Once upon a time people would cut their hair and nails only on lucky days. I fell upon an unlucky day for getting mine cut at Amélie. Perceiving a coiffeur's shop, up to the Paris mark, if not superior, I lifted the curtain which served for door, and humbly asked, "Can I have my hair cut?"

"No," said the operating garçon: a mature and frizzled artist, hard at work on a solid bust, classically draped with a snow-white toga.

"In a minute," said the master, apologetically; "that is, in several minutes."

No other hair-professor's sanctuary being in view, and not knowing where to find another, I took several turns of inspection about the spot—like a stage singer during the prelude to his song—and again lifted the curtain of concealment. The garçon, still absorbed in his task, took no notice of the additional light admitted. The master, expressing by a look, "What would you have? Phidias didn't make a statue in an hour," again said aloud, "In a minute; in several minutes."

So I betook myself to the admirable foot-bridge which spans the torrent of the Mondony, conducting you to the Military Establishment; for hither France sends her ailing soldiers and sailors, officers and men, to be luxuriously tended at the expense of the state, allowing them a season of two months each. It is the largest and pleasantest place of the kind in the country. Thence I saw the white nightcaps peeping out of infirmary windows; I gazed at the oleanders flowering in the hollow beneath me, the pomegranates idem, and the beds of plants which by-and-by will produce purple aubergines. I wondered when the little green figs, clustering on the branches, would be ripe; how much per bushel grapes fetched in the season; and how the nightingales hereabouts managed to escape the vol-au-vent and the spit. I patted the cheek of the pretty little girl with naked feet, and head and shoulders smothered in wraps, and I wouldn't give anything to the brown-faced beggar-man in em-

broidered sandals and scarlet bonnet. At the end of a good quarter of an hour I returned to the curtain. In a clear-obscure, sat the portly bust, still unfinished; as yet it had undergone only preliminaries, for the artist now produced his curling-irons. This drove me to desperation. In another half-hour the breakfast bell would sound.

Rushing down the street, I perceived, hanging over a door, a miniature brass imitation of the traditional barbers' basin. I entered. There sat within, patiently reading a newspaper, a gentleman "of orders grey," with a three days' beard. No shaver was visible; but a female overseer, in a passage, was seated on a money-taking chair of inspection.

"Monsieur is waiting his turn?" I asked.

"Yes," replied the three-days' beard, in a tone which implied that he had no intention of giving up his turn.

"Tout à l'heure; before long," said the inspectress. But as "tout à l'heure" might compromise breakfast and bring down cold victuals on my head, I left the gentleman in grey to enjoy his journal alone.

On, on; still down the street, casting right and left looks of wild inquiry. At the corner of a house, another brass basin. A port of refuge must be near. Verily, hard by were fly-spotted window-panes, guarding dusty bottles of antiquated perfumes.

The master of the magazine was alone and languid; but he said he could, and would, relieve me of my superabundant locks. After seating me in front of a grey-freckled looking-glass, he confined me in a long-sleeved cotton straight-jacket. A pin stuck in at the throat with clammy fingers put me entirely at his mercy.

"Same style?" he inquired, in feeble accents.

"Yes; only shorter."

"Afraid of the heat. Been long at Amélie? You ennue yourself here?"

"No; I can't exactly say that I do."

"I do. This is only the petite saison, the dull months, the time when there's nobody, except a few consumptive and scrofulous bourgeois and people who can only get away from their shops for a fortnight. Winter is the time for folks comme il faut. Plenty of soirées, which give me a good many coups de peigne, comb-strokes. I have more ladies than I can attend to; they wait for me. My garçon, just now, is ill at Le Vernet. I shall go there to-night, to fetch him, or another. If I don't find one, I shall shut up the house, and retire for the present to my property at Banyuls. You will have your head cleared with extract of rum?" (announced amongst the fly spots on the glass opposite as twenty centimes additional).

"No, thank you; the bath clears it quite enough."

"As you will. You did well to come to-day. To-morrow I shall be absent at my property."

After breakfast, on a map of the Pyrénées Orientales, I found it written: "The inhabitants are at once sober and prodigal, indolent

and impetuous, irascible and frank, love independence, and have a high opinion of themselves."

IN THE FALL.

THE old autumnal stillness holds the wood,
Thin mist of autumn makes the day a dream;
And country sounds fall faint, half understood
And half unheeded, as to sick men seem
The voices of their friends when death is near,
And earth grows vaguer to the tired ear.

At soft grey dawns and softer evening ends
The air is echoless and dull with dews;
And leaves hang loose, and whosoever wends
His way through woods is 'ware of altered hues
And alien tints; and oft with hollow sound
The chestnut husk falls rattling to the ground.

Now comes the faint warm smell of fresh-built ricks,
And empty fields look up at empty skies,
And smoke floats sidelong from the burning quicks,
And low across the stunted stubble flies
The whirring covey, till its wings have grown
A murmur—then, a memory alone.

Now, haply on some sunless afternoon
When brooding winds are whispering to the leaves,
Shrill twitter'd half-notes fill the air, and soon
From farm-house thatch and cosey cottage eaves
The circling swallows call their eager brood
And straight fly south, by unseen summers woo'd.

A certain sadness claims these autumn days—
A sadness sweeter to the poet's heart
Than all the full-fed joys and lavish rays
Of riper suns: old wounds, old woes, depart;
Life calls a truce, and nature seems to keep
Herself a hush to watch the world asleep.

A WOMAN'S RIGHTS CONVENTION.

I WAS sojourning, not very long ago, at one of those sunny, sparkling summer resorts, of which there are so many on the New England coast. Politics and the rights and wrongs in the world were quite forgotten in this enchanting sea-side nook; all was Arcadian in its indolence and pleasure. But one morning a strange rumour circulated through the great hotel, and spread among the fashionable, amusement-seeking colony: and the rumour soon received confirmation in print. Placards appeared at the street corners: a large-typed advertisement glared from the front page of the little paper which the guests enjoyed every morning with their hot rolls and coffee. There was a new sensation. The sojourners at Highport were informed that "a Convention to consider the Political and Social Rights of Woman, and to adopt measures to secure for the Downtrodden Sex the Right of Suffrage, would assemble at Pilgrim Hall, on Thursday, the 20th instant. Distinguished speakers would address the Convention, among them Reverend Selina Sharpe, Professor Maria Stockwell, Isaac Oddy the Philosopher, and Mark Antony Higgs, the famous Coloured

Orator. All were invited to attend—especially the fashionable ladies.”

The “fashionable ladies”—which was, indeed, a shrewd way of putting it, for what lady in Highport did not imagine herself included?—were, perhaps, not loath to have a little change; for flirting, sea-bathing, and the pleasure of making one’s toilet four times a day, do get a little monotonous after a while. Curiosity was a-tiptoe at the prospect of seeing some “real strong-minded women.”

It is within a day or two of the assembling of the “Convention,” and the signs of the approaching invasion begin to multiply. The landlord of the Beach House has orders to retain some thirty rooms for the accommodation of the “leaders” of the movement. The fashionable ladies have been deluged with sundry neat little tracts full of capital letters and italics, urging them to rouse themselves from the torpor of their servitude, to come to the convention, and to declare their independence of the tyrant man for now and always. Certain hirsute, shabby, slouch-hatted individuals suddenly appear in the streets, keen-eyed, observant of everything about them, and with long note-books, in which they make a jotting now and then; gentlemen of the press these, from New York and Boston, promptly arrived to detail the events of the convention from beginning to end. The gay visitors are fain to keep a close watch on the steamboats as they arrive, morning and evening, curious to catch sight of one of those wonderful beings, a woman’s rights woman. At last the public anxiety is satisfied; for, the evening before the appointed day, as the crowd of richly-dressed visitors is chirping and buzzing on the pretty pier, out steps, from the just-harboured steamboat, a ponderous lady of confident countenance, with a halo of silver-grey curls popping up and down around her ruddy, determined face, as if they were so many wire springs, and marches up to a cab with all the dignity of matronly middle age and her mission resting on her. A thin, solemn-looking man in black broadcloth and gloves; and a very sprucely-dressed coloured gentleman whose face wears a continual expression of protest that he should be regarded as a curiosity, attend her on either side. It is the famous president of the Woman’s Rights Society, Reverend Selina Sharpe, pastor of the Independent Church at Cranberry Centre; the solemn-looking man is known, not as Mr. Sharpe, but as Reverend Mrs. Sharpe’s husband—her

lesser half; the coloured gentleman, it is whispered, is Mark Antony Higgs, who refused the embassy to San Domingo, and is a redoubtable champion of woman’s rights. At the hotel, the reverend lady and her companions are gazed at with curiosity and much whispering, as she enters the dining-room, or is seen ascending and descending the broad staircase. Her arrival heralds that of the various multitude of her disciples. Ladies in spectacles; long-haired radicals with very wide collars and very slouchy coats and trousers; bright little richly-dressed women with snapping eyes and short ringlets; Arab-like philosophers with big foreheads and long flowing oriental beards; smart young miracles of editors with a very independent look and gait, who are going to say very startling things in a cool way when they get upon the stage tomorrow—these begin to promenade the streets and beach, oddly mingling with the fashionable folk, and intent upon the business for which they have arrived at Highport. There are, indeed, many human oddities and eccentricities among them, male and female; there are curious faces and curious dresses; but do not imagine that all the woman’s rights people are to be laughed or sneered at. Among them you will not fail to notice many vivacious, fashionably-attired, consciously-pretty young ladies, who, with all their “strong-mindedness,” are not indifferent to the admiring glances of the sea-side beaux, nor painfully oblivious of their toilet and the disposition of their tresses. Among them, too, are many fine-looking men, with no marked oddness of dress or demeanour; men well known in the nation for their talents and earnestness, who redeem the cause from that suspicion of fanaticism and crasiness which its more eccentric advocates cast upon it.

At eleven o’clock on the morning on which the convention is announced to meet, the little town is all astir with the zealous actors in the scene about to ensue, and the gaily-dressed audience to-be is a-tiptoe with expectation. The neat, graceful little hall, which has served these many weeks for fashionable concerts, picturesque lecturers and deft conjurors, is open, and free to all to enter. Soon the hall is well filled: the audience begins to manifest its impatience at the sight of the vacant stage by a well-bred clapping of hands; whereon two cadaverous reporters emerge timidly from behind the scenes, and survey the audience with a half-scared look. Next ap-

pears a sober, melancholy man, coat buttoned up to the chin, who walks sadly across the stage, sits down suddenly with his hat between his knees, and gazes intently on the ceiling. A jovial chuckling man follows him, plumps down near him, and chuckles on with his umbrella in one hand and his whiskers in the other. Then comes the principal piece of metaphorical pyrotechnics of the occasion: for in sweeps Reverend Selina Sharpe, stately and spectacled, in black silk with lace fixings, followed by a dazzling bevy of disciples, the majority of whom are surprisingly young, sparkling, and pretty. Here is a bright, vivacious blonde, with great blue eyes, an irresistible advocate, what with her smiles and glances; there a noted sculptress, tall and graceful, artistic in movement as in genius; there again a gentle, slender, spirituelle lady, with soft curls and kindly brown eyes, a poetess just getting to be talked about; still again, a Grecian head, a young face festooned with silvery white hair, a quiet, earnest woman's rights woman of the most genial and persuasive sort. A most dangerous galaxy, the keen-eyed man of society thinks; and *Materfamilias*, despite her sneering, is very prone to fear so too. It was all well enough, thought our fashionable friends, to go and laugh, as we did, at the Bloomers and the straight-waisted old maids, the venerable women in spectacles, and the sharp-featured men with long hair and broad collars; but it was really too bad to see ladies, pretty ones too, decked in the latest fashions, and with quite the manners of the *haut monde*, lending their countenance to this ridiculous movement! The impatience of the audience soon produces its effect; and now the silence which is the premonition of what is about to begin, the silence as the theatre curtain rises, falls upon the assembly as a starch lady advances and moves that "the Reverend Selina Sharpe be invited to take the chair." The solemn man immediately pops up, solemnly offers the gentle chairwoman his hand, and with a face whose solemnity seemed stereotyped, conducted her to the table in the centre of the platform.

Breathless interest, both in the disciples on the platform, and the scoffers in the audience, hangs upon the lips of the reverend lady as, with a cool and deliberate survey of the assemblage, she clears her throat to speak. She plunges in *medias res* without ado. She sends a thrill through the hearts of her followers by declaring at once that woman *suffrage* is the greatest

question of the age. "We are about to take," said she, involuntarily glancing at the space between her and the footlights, as if about to suit action to the word, "the greatest step in civilisation. Women are everywhere waking up," she continued, looking round the stage as if to see if any disciple were prone to sleep, "are waking up to the idea that they have rights. We have come here to Highport," with an eagle glance at the fashionable groups near the door, "to call upon the fashionable women to help us in the cause. Anybody who wishes to say anything," with a sudden descent to the practical, "is invited to come upon the platform and say it."

Two ladies and a male disciple started to their feet and came forward.

"Stop!" said the president, waving her fan. "We must have a business committee. How shall it be appointed?"

"I move, Mr.—a—Mrs. President," said a timid man in a treble voice, "that it be elected by the meeting."

"Mr. Simpkins, you are not in order," said the president, sharply, frowning upon him. "You forget, sir, at the very outset, the rights of women. How," she continued, turning to another elderly lady in white curls at her side, "shall the committee be appointed?"

"By the chair," came from the elderly lady, in a hard, dry voice, her muscles immovable. The committee duly appointed, a little sharp-featured woman came forward, and proceeded to read a letter from her maiden aunt. The writer expressed her hope that the woman's rights women would not neglect family and household duties, and trusted that a resolution would be passed, "quoting the New Testament text that man was the head of the woman."

This heresy was received by a great rustling of dresses, a loud groan from the jovial men, and a protest from the president; and the rest of the letter was unanimously dispensed with.

Another heretic, in the shape of a plump woman with an intensely purple bonnet, then took the floor, and hoped that women would really not adopt the masculine costume. She was sure that Mrs. Sharpe would never do such a thing.

A male voice: "Why not?"

Here several ladies began to talk at the same time, and there were shrill cries of "Order!" The orator, when the commotion subsided, continued by saying that it was not necessary to the protection of ladies who walked in the streets at night to have male attire; she had a friend who carried

a little pistol in her pocket which she knew how to use. This belligerent little lady having presently subsided amid the storm raised by this announcement, the president invited the startling editor with the cool manner and classic features to address the meeting. This was objected to by several ladies, who wanted to speak, and thought their rights once more invaded by the tyrant man. The startling editor, however, advanced, pushed back his luxuriant locks, pulled his coat-sleeves up a trifle so as to betray his cuffs, and ran his keen eye over the audience. "In the world's growth," said he, suddenly, as if it had just occurred to him, "man has been a tortoise; but woman has been a snail. Now, I don't mean to deify the women: I've known and loved many women."

(Hear, hear, from the younger ladies, frowns from the elders.)

"But there isn't an angel among 'em."

This caused a marked sensation. The president looked sharply at the speaker; "Oh, oh," came from several gallant gentlemen in a corner; the speaker was regarded with looks of disapproval by all the female eyes. He hastened to recover his position.

"However, women are better than men." (At this amende honorable there was a tumult of shrill applause, accompanied by parasol thumps and fan rattling.) "And I hope to see the day when the women will vote."

"Will the speaker permit me?" said a thin irascible-looking man on the platform. "I wish to put him one question."

"Very well, sir."

"Do you want women to step down into the dirty pool of politics?"

"No; I want them to go down like an angel into the troubled waters." (Com-mo-tion.)

"And you would like to see them go to the polls?"

"Yes; I'd rather see a woman in the street with a ballot in her hand than the Grecian bend in her back."

This sally delighted the straight-laced and elderly apostles, who applauded energetically: the younger and fashionable element blushed and frowned. The latter had more than once excited the president's ire. Now she had her revenge. Glancing disdainfully at her brilliantly-dressed and somewhat refractory disciples, she knocked on the table, and said, in a most cutting manner:

"We must really have order. If you

applaud so vigorously, you'll shake down somebody's back hair."

Here, a little variety was given to the entertainment by the appearance of the noted ballad singers, the "Hopkinson family," on the stage. These started off in a blithe ditty, which celebrated the downfall of the tyrant man from his pedestal, and the entrance of women into congressional halls and cabinet councils.

The warblers having ceased their warbling, the president rose, evidently primed with a subject of importance.

"The hat," said she, looking straight at the door, "will now be passed round. I beg that part of the audience near the door, not to run away before the hat reaches them. It is grateful to get dollars of sympathy as well as words of sympathy." The fashionables at the door, shamed by this stratagem into staying, were forced to contribute; and the president peered with satisfaction into the hat, when it had gone its rounds, and came back heavy with the "sinews of war."

The discussion was then resumed by a recent convert, a young man with very long whiskers, who seemed to be still in doubt on several points. He wanted to know whether making bread, bringing up children, and keeping secrets, were compatible with the cause?

Half a dozen ladies hastened to answer, but the negro apostle secured the floor. He assumed a lofty and indignant air toward his white brother; said that Reverend Selina Sharpe made "de bess bread he ever ate;" that the great Mrs. Boldstone had fourteen of "de bess behaved children in the country;" and that Mrs. Lucretia Stubbins "presided over her household like a queen." All of which seemed thoroughly to convince the convert, who was seen and heard no more.

The president, looking at her watch, now admonished the meeting that the dinner hour had arrived, and begged to make just two final remarks. "We are asked," she said, taking up an oratorical pose, "if, having the suffrage, we will fight. I answer, we are even ready for that; but we hope to introduce, with our ballots, the reign of universal peace. Brothers and sisters, it is our mission, for the present, to keep the world in hot water!"

A little fiery lady took the floor by storm. She was indignant, she said in a high voice, when the president declared that this meeting was only a means of agitation—indignant, yes, indignant, that it should be used

to give one person (here a killing glance at the president) notoriety!

The president, angrily cool, remarked that what was said about her didn't hurt her. She had never failed in what she undertook, and didn't mean to.

The little fiery lady called upon the meeting to mark the tone of arrogance and tyranny the president adopted.

Cries of Order! Shame! Adjourn! Adjourn!

The little fiery lady continued to speak and gesticulate; confusion became anarchy; the president stood firm as a rock amid the storm; and, in a momentary lull, declared the meeting adjourned.

The fashionables stared at the speakers with mouths agape as they filed out of the hall, and proceeded to the hotel, discussing the disturbance warmly as they went. They were the lions—or rather lionesses—at the hotel that evening, where there was an impromptu ball, the younger disciples actually mixing in the dance, while the elders looked on, half disapproving.

TWENTY-ONE MONTHS OF SILENCE.

It happened on a summer evening, now something more than two years ago, that the surgeon of a certain regiment of high standing then quartered at Chatham, was engaged in his surgery in making some experiments of a chemical sort, when one of the men belonging to the regiment came to the door and desired to have speech with him. This man was a private, John Strong by name, lately enlisted, and not remarkable hitherto as having in any way shown himself to be different from the rest of the rank and file of the corps. He had come to the doctor, he said, to complain of the state of his health. He felt so "queer" all over, as he described it; could not settle down to any occupation; was cold and hot by turns; had pains all over his body and limbs, and was altogether very much "out of sorts." After hearing all this, and after having recourse to the usual pulse-feeling, and tongue-inspecting formula, the doctor wrote the man an order for admission to the infirmary, and, telling him to go to bed immediately, promised to visit him when he made his usual rounds the first thing next morning.

True to his promise, at an early hour on the following day the regimental surgeon, whom we will call Dr. Curzon, went to the infirmary, and made his way to the bedside of the new patient, expecting to find him suffering from some slight feverish attack, or some other trifling ailment, which a day or two's quiet, and a dose of medicine, would quickly set right. The aspect of the invalid as the surgeon approached the bed, was even more encouraging than he had expected, and Dr.

Curzon was on the point of giving him his views on the subject of false alarms when, happening to look more attentively at the patient than he had done before, he observed that Private Strong was gesticulating in a very extraordinary manner, and especially twisting his mouth and jaws into a variety of strange and unearthly contortions, as if in an ineffectual attempt to utter some articulate sounds, which would not come forth. On examining him yet more attentively, the doctor observed that a sheet of paper was lying on his breast, on which was written the following inscription: "I HAVE HAD A FIT IN THE NIGHT, AND HAVE LOST THE POWER OF SPEAKING."

Dr. Curzon had been an army-surgeon for many a long year, and had come in contact with numberless instances of deceit and shamming, practised by soldiers with the view of obtaining a discharge. He remembered how some of them had, to his own certain knowledge, assumed to be mad or idiotic; how others had scratched raw places on their limbs, and bound over them penny-pieces (in the days of the old copper coinage) or even rubbed them with phosphorus got from lucifer matches, in order to make such abrasions resemble sores of a dangerous and incurable sort. Then, besides, there are books written on this subject full of the most wonderful examples of feigning in the matter of disease, such simulation being sometimes engaged in with a view to some special object, and sometimes (but this almost invariably by women) with the desire of attracting attention and winning a kind of renown. Among men this simulating of disease—malingering it is called in military phrase—is resorted to with a specific intention. "The sufferings imposed by malingerers on themselves," says Gavin on Feigned Diseases, "are infinitely greater than any punishment a commanding officer would dare to inflict; thus a soldier for a period of eighteen months walked with his body bent forward so that his arms reached within two inches of the ground." In another a discharge "was so eagerly coveted that a man had his arm shot through to obtain it;" while in another place, when treating of the extreme difficulty of getting hold of any evidence by means of which the malingeringer may be criminated, he expresses shrewdly enough his opinion that "there is a kind of Freemasonry among soldiers which is perhaps conducive to the harmony of the barrack-room, but which by preventing the exemplary from exposing the worthless, and by holding up the informer as an object of universal abhorrence, renders it extremely difficult to obtain an accurate knowledge of the various means of simulating disease." Another medical authority proclaims that he has "no doubt that methods have been systematised for simulating disease, and that these are preserved in many regiments and handed over for the benefit of those who may be inclined to make a trial of them."

Dr. Curzon questioned the other occupants of the infirmary, and especially those who slept in the beds which stood one on each side of that

occupied by Private Strong, as to whether they had seen or heard anything of this seizure or fit, by which the dumb man professed to have been attacked in the night. Not one of them knew anything about it, and it was evident that if the man had ever really been the victim of such a seizure, he had taken it very quietly, and had not thought it necessary to disturb his companions; which, even supposing dumbness to have been one of the first symptoms of his attack, he might easily have done, the very fact of his having inscribed the particulars of his case upon the paper which the doctor found lying on his breast proving that he was certainly in possession of all his other faculties.

Dr. Curzon proceeded next to subject the patient himself to a very searching examination. He addressed several questions to him—for the man did not profess to be deaf as well as dumb—and bade him try at least to utter some kind of sound, more or less articulate, in answer; but beyond several extravagant distortions of the features generally, and much ineffectual opening and shutting of the mouth particularly, no response whatever was to be obtained. Next the doctor set himself to ascertain whether there was—as might certainly have been expected—any loss of power in connexion with any other of the faculties. No such thing. The man was in all other respects perfectly healthful and vigorous, and not only was so, but looked so. Lastly, Dr. Curzon proceeded to engage in a prolonged scrutiny of the man's vocal chords, using an instrument made expressly for the purpose of such examinations, by means of which the interior of the throat is exposed to the view of the investigator. This proceeding, however, was productive of as little result as the rest. Mr. Strong's vocal chords were, as far as external appearance went, in much the same condition as those of other people. The examination over, Dr. Curzon left his patient for a time, entertaining a pretty firm conviction that this was simply a bad case of shamming, and leaving directions with all those who were likely to come in contact with the dumb man to keep a sharp look out.

Days succeeded days, and the lips of John Strong remained—as far as the utterance of any articulate sound went—hermetically sealed. Not one of those about him could betray him into speech, nor was he ever heard to mutter any word, or intelligible sound in his sleep. Experiments of all kinds, in which the body and the mind were alike addressed were tried. The doctor—a man of great resource and much ingenuity—would, for instance, wake the man suddenly, in the middle of the night, and make him get out of bed to attend patients who needed assistance: addressing him, at that moment of sudden waking up, with some words which required an answer. Mr. Strong was, however, proof against these sudden surprises, and was quite himself even when thus abruptly roused in the middle of the night. Not a word was to be got out of him. Plenty of gesticulation, abundant evidence of attention, and of a clear

comprehension of what was required of him; but no speech. It was probable, the doctor thought, that if the man could for a time be deprived of consciousness, he would in that condition be brought to say something more or less intelligible. He determined to get the dumb man under the influence of chloroform, and try what could be done with him then. The chloroform was applied accordingly; but the man by resisting, first, its application at all, and then its influence when they did succeed in applying it, managed to defeat the doctor's efforts in this line: the doctor hesitating to incur the risk of administering by main force a dose strong enough to render his patient incapable of all resistance. An attempt was then made to intoxicate him, and, as he refused to take a sufficient amount of spirit to bring about the desired end, a considerable dose of alcohol was cunningly introduced into the medicine he was in the habit of taking; but he steadily refused, come what might, to swallow a single drop of the medicine so craftily qualified.

The doctor's wife had at this time in her employment a young woman, serving in the capacity of housemaid, who besides being gifted with considerable personal attractions, was also endowed with a large share of that capacity for mischief, the possession of which persons of a misanthropic turn of mind are fond of ascribing to all members of the sex which doubles our joys and divides our sorrows. Having confided to this young person the particulars of Mr. Strong's case, the astute doctor, a little more than hinting that he looked upon the whole thing in the light of a "do," requested her as a last resource to come to the rescue. On a certain fine hot afternoon in July, the patient was sent up to Dr. Curzon's house, ostensibly to do some work in the doctor's garden, but really to encounter the fascinations of the doctor's housemaid. During the whole of that afternoon the full force of those fascinations was freely exercised upon him, whatever he did, and wherever he went. Did he set himself to the accomplishment of his allotted task in the garden, there was this dangerous young person ready to help him with his work, and even to do that work for him. Did he, on the other hand, sit down to rest himself in the shade, there she was, sitting beside him and conversationally disposed. She plied him with draughts of beer when he was thirsty, and later in the evening made him comfortable with tea and buttered toast. Strong drank the beer and ate the toast, nay, he smiled upon her gratefully, and expressed his contentment by the gesticulations which had by this time become familiar to him. All these things he did, but speak, or utter sound, he did not.

Yet there was no sort of colloquial snare which she did not lay for her companion; sometimes appealing to him for directions when they were at work together, and this in the most artless manner, as if she had forgotten the existence of that infirmity of his; at other times adopting a different line, and making open allusion to it, frankly telling him that she did not

believe in its genuineness, and urging him to admit to her in confidence that it was all a sham. Then she would be angry with him for his obstinacy, and rate him soundly, or perhaps have recourse to ridicule, and laugh at him in the most aggravating manner possible. But Private Strong was proof against it all. He was deaf to her entreaties, he smiled at her irritation, he joined in the laugh against himself when she was sarcastic. Finally he retired triumphant from the encounter, having passed a very pleasant afternoon, having eaten and drunk many good things, and leaving the question of the real or fictitious nature of his infirmity exactly where it had been when he set out in the morning to spend the day in Dr. Curzon's flower-garden.

The dumb man's statement now began to be believed by many who had before treated it with contempt. But the handmaiden maintained stoutly her conviction that Private Strong was certainly shamming, and was no more dumb than she was.

It was soon after the failure of this experiment, and about four months subsequent to the time of Strong's first attack, that the writer of this brief abstract, happening to be in the neighbourhood of Chatham, first heard the outline of the dumb man's story. It was soon arranged that on a particular day, which suited the convenience of all concerned, he should go over to the dépôt, and pay a visit to this singular person, in company with a certain military officer and the regimental surgeon, Dr. Curzon.

This last-named gentleman, as we walked along in the direction of the place where the speechless soldier was at work, took the opportunity of relating some circumstances worthy of recapitulation here. It appeared that in the very regiment in which Dr. Curzon held his appointment there had lately occurred a case indicating such power of sustaining a deception possessed by one of the ordinary rank and file, as might well serve to make any regimental surgeon suspicious of the men under his charge. In this instance the assumed disease had been a combination of rheumatism and paralysis affecting the head and one of the arms. The head was completely forced out of its natural position, and bowed over to one side; the shoulder on the same side being raised to the ear, and the arm fixed in a bent position against the body. Of course such an affliction was fatal to everything in the shape of drill, and to the performance of any military duty; accordingly all sorts of remedies were applied with a view of curing this unfortunate recruit of his distortion, and getting his head and arm back into their natural condition. Some of these remedies were sufficiently painful. Experiments were made with red-hot irons, and others in which certain forms of acupuncture were resorted to. The unfortunate cripple endured all without flinching, but not one of them seemed to make the slightest impression on his malady. The obstinacy and peculiarity of the case had awakened some suspicion in the medical authorities, and he had been watched by night as

well as by day. Not to the slightest purpose, the man retaining in his sleep, as in his waking hours, that same distorted position, with the head forced over on one side and the arm fixed tightly against the body.

There is no doubt that this fact—which if to be accounted for at all can only be explained by supposing some power of exercising the will to be retainable by some men even in their sleep—had its influence in disarming the suspicion of those with whom the power of granting discharges rested. At all events, a medical board meeting was held, evidence was adduced to show that night and day this unfortunate cripple was never seen in any other position than in this distorted one, that all remedial applications were inefficacious, and that the recruit being utterly useless and unfit for service, there was nothing for it but to discharge him. Discharged he was accordingly. A fortnight afterwards, Dr. Curzon met him in the street walking along with his head erect and his arms swinging at his sides like other people. Indeed, the man actually had the audacity to address the doctor, and to congratulate him on the success of his medical treatment of the case: remarking that he was perfectly cured now, and very much obliged to the authorities for his discharge, as it had enabled him to take a very good situation in the town.

The doctor added, in reference to the present case, that he had resolved to utilise the man as he best could, and had accordingly sent him to the tailors' shop, where his dumbness would not stand in his way, and where his previous habits—for he had been bred a tailor—would be favourable to his making himself useful. By means of this arrangement, the necessity of taking immediate action in the difficult matter was obviated, and time gained in which to test him further. As the doctor concluded, we arrived at the door of the building appropriated to the regimental tailoring department, and went in.

Half a dozen soldiers were sitting on a raised tailors' board in the well-known professional attitude. They all raised their heads when we entered, except one: who, seated nearly with his back to the door, just turned his head and his eyes for a moment slightly, in our direction, and then went on with his sewing. A moment afterwards, on the name of "Strong" being called out by the doctor, this same person sprang off the board with quite a curious display of activity, and stood confronting us, with his hands close down by his sides, his stockinged feet so close together that the great toes touched each other, and his eyes staring very intently straight before him at the doctor. This gentleman then proceeded to ask him some questions, as, indeed, we all did—how he felt, whether there was any change in his condition, what was the state of his general health, and the like. He answered by gesticulation, always of a very energetic kind, and sometimes by means of the deaf and dumb alphabet on his fingers. He told us in

this way, I remember, among other things, that he came from Wales, and that he was the first of his family who had ever been afflicted in this extraordinary manner. "Come," said the doctor at last, "let us see you make an effort to speak. Try to say, 'How d'ye do?'" The man certainly *seemed* to respond to this appeal, and nothing could be more energetic than the violent chopping action of the jaws with which he did so; but no word, nor, indeed, any sound whatever, was uttered. After this, we all stood staring rather helplessly, and in a state of mystification at each other. The soldiers sitting on the board with their legs doubled under them, stared too.

The scene was brought to a close by the doctor. "Well," he said, "you are very comfortable here and usefully employed. You know we couldn't possibly send you out and throw you upon your own resources, in the state in which you are at present, so you ought to think yourself very lucky." This was said, as the doctor told me afterwards, to show the man that he had nothing to hope in the way of getting his discharge. He appeared well-pleased with what he heard, nodded and smiled briskly, and jumped up on his board again.

"He is so extraordinarily sharp and quick of hearing," whispered the doctor, as we left the building, "that I must ask you not to speak about him till we are well out of ear-shot." I had little to say, however. My impression was simply of a good-looking young fellow of a light and active build, with exceedingly bright eyes, having perhaps something a little mad about them. There was nothing stupid or brutal in his appearance; on the contrary, he looked brisk and lively, as well as exceedingly cunning. He certainly gave one the idea of a man possessed of much dogged determination, and quite capable of carrying out any scheme of an underhand nature which he might set before himself as a thing to be accomplished.

What Private John Strong did set before himself as a thing to be accomplished, he did in this case most distinctly and completely succeed in doing. He carried his point. He was too much for the authorities. His powers were concentrated; theirs were diffused. He had but one thing to think of; they had many. For such work as mounting guard with its necessary interchange of sign and countersign, as well as for all other forms of military duty of which speech is an essential part, this man was unfitted, as well as for the transmission of verbal messages, or spoken instructions; and so it came about at last that on a certain day Private John Strong was brought before the medical board, and after passing through another examination, and being subjected to a variety of final tests, was declared to be unfit for service, and was, then and there, formally discharged.

Soon afterwards, I found myself once more in the neighbourhood of the great garrison in which this curious drama had been enacted.

Now that the curtain had fallen, I felt a strong desire to hear something of the principal performer, and to learn what had become of him after his retirement from the stage. In accordance with this wish I lost no time in making my way to the barracks at which my speechless friend's regiment was quartered, bent on picking up all the information I could. Fortune was propitious to me. Almost immediately on my entering the barrack-square I had the good luck to run against a certain sergeant-major belonging to the regiment, who had had the subject of my inquiries especially under his charge. From this officer I learnt that Dr. Curzon had been removed to another station, and that so the case had passed from under his superintendence; and that the doctor who succeeded to the care of the man had, after very careful investigation of the whole affair, become sufficiently convinced of the genuineness of the case to bring it before the medical board with the result mentioned. "A few days afterwards," said the sergeant, concluding his account: "I met the man walking along the street, in company with a young woman. 'Good-evening, Strong,' I said on speculation, with a sort of notion in my head that he'd answer me. And so he did. 'Good-evening, sergeant,' he says, speaking as glib as possible and with as knowing a grin as ever you saw." The sergeant concluded his narrative by informing me that the young man had got married, and was at work at a sewing-machine factory in the town.

It was a difficult place to find, this factory; but I managed after going to all sorts of wrong places, and making inquiry everywhere but where I ought, for "a young man named Strong," to unearth my gentleman in a large bare-looking building which quivered all over with the vibration of the machinery in motion in its upper story.

He was a little thinner and more haggard looking, perhaps, than when I had last seen him, and was of course dressed in the costume of a civilian instead of the uniform of the regiment to which he had once belonged, but in all other respects he was unchanged. He presented the same sharp watchful appearance which I had remarked before, and had the same keen restless glance darting suspiciously hither and thither. He did not speak on first coming forward to meet me, but merely made a movement with his head. I think it probable that for a single instant he was confused, seeing a stranger before him, whether he was to be dumb or not. Of course he soon remembered that all that, was a thing of the past. In answer to my remark that I was curious to know how he had recovered the use of speech, of which when I had seen him, nearly a couple of years ago, he had been deprived, he proceeded to tell a story which he seemed to have on the tip of his tongue ready for any such emergency.

He stated that shortly after his discharge, he accidentally met a young man with whom he was acquainted, and whose function it was to compound the medicines dispensed at a certain

military hospital which he mentioned by name. The "compounder," wiser than any of the constituted authorities, told him that he knew of a medicine which would certainly give him back the use of his tongue, if he only chose to take the trouble to go up to the hospital and fetch it. Naturally enough, ex-private Strong did agree to take that trouble, and, taking the medicine too, observed that after the very first dose his whole interior arrangements were suffused with a glow of warmth; on finishing the bottle, commenced under such happy auspices, he was able to speak, but in a low voice: "just like a little child."

Such was ex-private Strong's ingenuous story. From speaking "like a child," Mr. Strong, after another bottle or two of the wonderful medicine, had got to speak like a grown-up person.

Once and only once in the course of our conversation did my ex-military acquaintance approach the border-land of danger. I had asked him how it happened that he enlisted in the first instance, and he had replied that he hardly knew—that "he had done it in a kind of freak;" upon which it occurred to me to add, speaking in as careless a tone as I could command:

"And directly afterwards you were sorry for it?"

"Yes," was his answer, corrected immediately afterwards, and negatived in a very roundabout fashion. Very soon afterwards he announced that it was tea-time at the factory, and beat a rapid retreat.

What qualities are displayed here! What concentration of purpose, what self-denial, what huge development of that which, in sporting phrase, is called the "staying" power; the power of holding on and sticking to a thing with a fixed intention, day after day, week after week, month after month, for a space of nearly two years! It seems pretty clear that it is not the mere possession of these faculties which is respectable, but only the application of them to a good and worthy purpose.

GREEN TEA.

A CASE REPORTED BY MARTIN HESSELIUS, THE GERMAN PHYSICIAN.

IN TEN CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER III. DR. HESSELIUS PICKS UP SOMETHING IN LATIN BOOKS.

WELL, I have called at Blank-street.

On inquiring at the door, the servant told me that Mr. Jennings was engaged very particularly with a gentleman, a clergyman from Kenlis, his parish in the country. Intending to reserve my privilege and to call again, I merely intimated that I should try another time, and had turned to go, when the servant begged my pardon, and asked me, looking at me a little more

attentively than well-bred persons of his order usually do, whether I was Dr. Hesselius, and, on learning that I was, he said, "Perhaps then, sir, you would allow me to mention it to Mr. Jennings, for I am sure he wishes to see you."

The servant returned in a moment, with a message from Mr. Jennings, asking me to go into his study, which was in effect his back drawing-room, promising to be with me in a very few minutes.

This was really a study—almost a library. The room was lofty, with two tall slender windows, and rich dark curtains. It was much larger than I had expected, and stored with books on every side, from the floor to the ceiling. The upper carpet—for to my tread it felt that there were two or three—was a Turkey carpet. My steps fell noiselessly. The book-cases standing out, placed the windows, particularly narrow ones, in deep recesses. The effect of the room was, although extremely comfortable, and even luxurious, decidedly gloomy, and aided by the silence, almost oppressive. Perhaps, however, I ought to have allowed something for association. My mind had connected peculiar ideas with Mr. Jennings. I stepped into this perfectly silent room, of a very silent house, with a peculiar foreboding; and its darkness, and solemn clothing of books, for except where two narrow looking-glasses were set in the wall, they were everywhere, helped this sombre feeling.

While awaiting Mr. Jennings's arrival, I amused myself by looking into some of the books with which his shelves were laden. Not among these, but immediately under them, with their backs upward, on the floor, I lighted upon a complete set of Swedenborg's *Arcana Cælestia*, in the original Latin, a very fine folio set, bound in the natty livery which theology affects, pure vellum, namely, gold letters, and carmine edges. There were paper markers in several of these volumes. I raised and placed them, one after the other, upon the table, and opening where these papers were placed, I read in the solemn Latin phraseology, a series of sentences indicated by a pencilled line at the margin. Of these I copy here a few, translating them into English.

"When man's interior sight is opened, which is that of his spirit, then there appear the things of another life, which cannot possibly be made visible to the bodily sight."

"By the internal sight it has been granted me to see the things that are in the other life, more clearly than I see those that are in the world. From these considerations, it is evident that external vision exists from interior vision, and this from a vision still more interior, and so on." . . .

"There are with every man at least two evil spirits." . . .

"With wicked genii there is also a fluent speech, but harsh and grating. There is also among them, a speech which is not fluent, wherein the dissent of the thoughts is perceived as something secretly creeping along within it." . . .

"The evil spirits associated with man are, indeed, from the hells, but when with man they are not then in hell, but are taken out thence. The place where they then are is in the midst between heaven and hell, and is called the world of spirits—when the evil spirits who are with man, are in that world, they are not in any infernal torment, but in every thought and affection of the man, and so, in all that the man himself enjoys. But when they are remitted into their hell, they return to their former state." . . .

"If evil spirits could perceive that they were associated with man, and yet that they were spirits separate from him, and if they could flow in into the things of his body, they would attempt by a thousand means to destroy him; for they hate man with a deadly hatred." . . .

"Knowing, therefore, that I was a man in the body, they were continually striving to destroy me, not as to the body only, but especially as to the soul; for to destroy any man or spirit is the very delight of the life of all who are in hell; but I have been continually protected by the Lord. Hence it appears how dangerous it is for man to be in a living consort with spirits, unless he be in the good of faith." . . .

"Nothing is more carefully guarded from the knowledge of associate spirits than their being thus conjoint with a man, for if they knew it they would speak to him, with the intention to destroy him." . . .

"The delight of hell is to do evil to man, and to hasten his eternal ruin."

A long note, written with a very sharp and fine pencil, in Mr. Jennings's neat hand, at the foot of the page, caught my eye. Expecting his criticism upon the text, I read a word or two, and stopped, for it was something quite different, and began with these words, *Deus misere-*

atur mei—"May God compassionate me." Thus warned of its private nature, I averted my eyes, and shut the book, replacing all the volumes as I had found them, except one which interested me, and in which, as men studious and solitary in their habits will do, I grew so absorbed as to take no cognisance of the outer world, nor to remember where I was.

I was reading some pages which refer to "representatives" and "correspondents," in the technical language of Swedenborg, and had arrived at a passage, the substance of which is, that evil spirits, when seen by other eyes than those of their infernal associates, present themselves, by "correspondence," in the shape of the beast (*fera*) which represents their particular lust and life in aspect direful and atrocious. This is a long passage, and particularises a number of those bestial forms.

CHAPTER IV. FOUR EYES WERE READING THE PASSAGE.

I WAS running the head of my pencil-case along the line as I read it, and something caused me to raise my eyes.

Directly before me was one of the mirrors I have mentioned, in which I saw reflected the tall shape of my friend Mr. Jennings leaning over my shoulder, and reading the page at which I was busy, and with a face so dark and wild that I should hardly have known him.

I turned and rose. He stood erect also, and with an effort laughed a little, saying:

"I came in and asked you how you did, but without succeeding in awaking you from your book; so I could not restrain my curiosity, and very impertinently, I'm afraid, peeped over your shoulder. This is not your first time of looking into those pages. You have looked into Swedenborg, no doubt, long ago?"

"Oh dear, yes! I owe Swedenborg a great deal; you will discover traces of him in the little book on Metaphysical Medicine, which you were so good as to remember."

Although my friend affected a gaiety of manner, there was a slight flush in his face, and I could perceive that he was inwardly much perturbed.

"I'm scarcely yet qualified, I know so little of Swedenborg. I've only had them a fortnight," he answered, "and I think they are rather likely to make a solitary man nervous—that is, judging from the very little I have read—I don't say that they have made me so," he laughed; "and

"I'm so very much obliged for the book. I hope you got my note?"

I made all proper acknowledgments and modest disclaimers.

"I never read a book that I go with so entirely as that of yours," he continued. "I saw at once there is more in it than is quite unfolded. Do you know Dr. Harley?" he asked, rather abruptly.

In passing, the editor remarks that the physician here named was one of the most eminent who ever practised in England.

I did, having had letters to him, and had experienced from him great courtesy and considerable assistance during my visit to England.

"I think that man one of the very greatest fools I ever met in my life," said Mr. Jennings.

This was the first time I had ever heard him say a sharp thing of anybody, and such a term applied to so high a name a little startled me.

"Really! and in what way?" I asked.

"In his profession," he answered.

I smiled.

"I mean this," he said: "he seems to me, one half, blind—I mean one half of all he looks at is dark—preternaturally bright and vivid all the rest; and the worst of it is, it seems wilful. I can't get him—I mean he won't—I've had some experience of him as a physician, but I look on him as, in that sense, no better than a paralytic mind, an intellect half dead. I'll tell you—I know I shall some time—all about it," he said, with a little agitation. "You stay some months longer in England. If I should be out of town during your stay for a little time, would you allow me to trouble you with a letter?"

"I should be only too happy," I assured him.

"Very good of you. I am so utterly dissatisfied with Harley."

"A little leaning to the materialistic school," I said.

"A mere materialist," he corrected me; "you can't think how that sort of thing worries one who knows better. You won't tell any one—any of my friends you know—that I am hippish; now, for instance, no one knows—not even Lady Mary—that I have seen Dr. Harley, or any other doctor. So pray don't mention it; and, if I should have any threatening of an attack, you'll kindly let me write, or, should I be in town, have a little talk with you."

I was full of conjecture, and uncon-

sciously I found I had fixed my eyes gravely on him, for he lowered his for a moment, and he said:

"I see you think I might as well tell you now, or else you are forming a conjecture; but you may as well give it up. If you were guessing all the rest of your life, you will never hit on it."

He shook his head smiling, and over that wintry sunshine a black cloud suddenly came down, and he drew his breath in, through his teeth, as men do in pain.

"Sorry, of course, to learn that you apprehend occasion to consult any of us; but, command me when and how you like, and I need not assure you that your confidence is sacred."

He then talked of quite other things, and in a comparatively cheerful way; and, after a little time, I took my leave.

CHAPTER V. DOCTOR HESSELIUS IS SUMMONED TO RICHMOND.

WE parted cheerfully, but he was not cheerful, nor was I. There are certain expressions of that powerful organ of spirit—the human face—which, although I have seen them often, and possess a doctor's nerve, yet disturb me profoundly. One look of Mr. Jennings haunted me. It had seized my imagination with so dismal a power that I changed my plans for the evening, and went to the opera, feeling that I wanted a change of ideas.

I heard nothing of or from him for two or three days, when a note in his hand reached me. It was cheerful, and full of hope. He said that he had been for some little time so much better—quite well, in fact—that he was going to make a little experiment, and run down for a month or so to his parish, to try whether a little work might not quite set him up. There was in it a fervent religious expression of gratitude for his restoration, as he now almost hoped he might call it.

A day or two later I saw Lady Mary, who repeated what his note had announced, and told me that he was actually in Warwickshire, having resumed his clerical duties at Kenlis; and she added, "I begin to think that he is really perfectly well, and that there never was anything the matter, more than nerves and fancy; we are all nervous, but I fancy there is nothing like a little hard work for that kind of weakness, and he has made up his mind to try it. I should not be surprised if he did not come back for a year."

Notwithstanding all this confidence, only

two days later I had this note, dated from his house off Piccadilly :

"Dear sir. I have returned disappointed. If I should feel at all able to see you, I shall write to ask you kindly to call. At present I am too low, and, in fact, simply unable to say all I wish to say. Pray don't mention my name to my friends. I can see no one. By-and-by, please God, you shall hear from me. I mean to take a run into Shropshire, where some of my people are. God bless you! May we, on my return, meet more happily than I can now write."

About a week after this I saw Lady Mary at her own house, the last person, she said, left in town, and just on the wing for Brighton, for the London season was quite over. She told me that she had heard from Mr. Jennings's niece, Martha, in Shropshire. There was nothing to be gathered from her letter, more than that he was low and nervous. In those words, of which healthy people think so lightly, what a world of suffering is sometimes hidden!

Nearly five weeks passed without any further news of Mr. Jennings. At the end of that time I received a note from him. He wrote:

"I have been in the country, and have had change of air, change of scene, change of faces, change of everything and in everything—but *myself*. I have made up my mind, so far as the most irresolute creature on earth can do it, to tell my case fully to you. If your engagements will permit, pray come to me to-day, to-morrow, or the next day; but, pray defer as little as possible. You know not how much I need help. I have a quiet house at Richmond, where I now am. Perhaps you can manage to come to dinner, or to luncheon, or even to tea. You shall have no trouble in finding me out. The servant at Blankstreet, who takes this note, will have a carriage at your door at any hour you please; and I am always to be found. You will say that I ought not to be alone. I have tried everything. Come and see."

I called up the servant, and decided on going out the same evening, which accordingly I did.

He would have been much better in a lodging-house, or a hotel, I thought, as I

drove up through a short double row of sombre elms to a very old-fashioned brick house, darkened by the foliage of these trees, which over-topped, and nearly surrounded it. It was a perverse choice, for nothing could be imagined more triste and silent. The house, I found, belonged to him. He had stayed for a day or two in town, and, finding it for some cause insupportable, had come out here, probably because being furnished and his own, he was relieved of the thought and delay of selection, by coming here.

The sun had already set, and the red reflected light of the western sky illuminated the scene with the peculiar effect with which we are all familiar. The hall seemed very dark, but, getting to the back drawing-room, whose windows command the west, I was again in the same dusky light. I sat down, looking out upon the richly-wooded landscape that glowed in the grand and melancholy light which was every moment fading. The corners of the room were already dark; all was growing dim, and the gloom was insensibly toning my mind, already prepared for what was sinister. I was waiting alone for his arrival, which soon took place. The door communicating with the front room opened, and the tall figure of Mr. Jennings, faintly seen in the ruddy twilight, came, with quiet stealthy steps, into the room.

We shook hands, and, taking a chair to the window, where there was still light enough to enable us to see each other's faces, he sat down beside me, and, placing his hand upon my arm, with scarcely a word of preface, began his narrative.

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VERONICA.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE."
IN FIVE BOOKS.

BOOK III.

CHAPTER I. THE ROAD THAT LED NOWHITHER.

VERY near to Florence is the valley of the Ema.

The Ema is a small stream which strikingly contradicts the proverb, "As you make your bed, so you must lie on it," the bed the Ema has formed for itself being a valley a mile or so broad in some places, reckoning from hill to hill; and the little river trickling through it now-a-days, in a disproportionately small channel, which may be (and is in more than one part of its course) spanned by a bridge of a single small arch. The ridge of hills dividing the valley of the Ema from that of the Arno is well known by sight to most of the many strangers who go to Florence. Few casual visitors, however, cross the ridge. The landscape seen from its summit is peculiarly Tuscan, and to the unaccustomed eye there is something drear and melancholy mingling with its beauty. After a time that impression is much softened. The peculiar delicacy of colouring; the long vistas of hills that fold like clouds one over the other, and present nearly as much variety of outline as the clouds themselves; the countless towers, villas, and churches that lie scattered over the scene, and peep forth from amid the hoary olive-trees; combine to charm the sight.

We come to learn the loveliness as we learn the expression of a face whose stranger aspect was so different from its known and familiar one, that the recollection of our first impression startles us.

The great enchantment of this Tuscan landscape lies in the atmosphere through which it is viewed. The wonderful lights and shades, the exquisite tints, the limpid clearness of the skies, are inestimable in their effect upon the scenery. In a winter afternoon at sunset, the bare, distant Apennines are touched with such ethereal hues—such lilacs, silvery greys, blues, and rose-colours—that they look like mother-of-pearl mountains in some fairy story. Not Hope herself can more delusively beautify the barren distance than does this southern air.

Then, as the sun goes down, and the brief twilight deepens, there grows a solemn purple on the hills: a colour that seems, in its intense bloomy depth, to fold around them like a cloud-garment. It is not that the hills grow purple, but that the great purple descends and wraps itself about the hills. Or, in the early summer days, what a fathomless ocean of dazzling blue is it that the swallows sail across! Bright, rapid, gladsome little skiffs upon that silent sea! Every projecting stone in the cottages is precious, casting as it does an island of black shadow on the glare of wall or road. The springing wheat is almost too emerald-bright to be gazed upon. Beside the burnt brown tower on the hill, stand the strong cypresses, writing dark characters against the shimmering sky—hieroglyphics which different eyes so differently interpret, and which to some remain dumb and unread for ever.

It is June. Through the vale of Ema ripples the shrunken river among the parched, thirsty sand. Here and there comes a stretch that seems to have absorbed the little stream. You can cross it dry-shod. But, lo! some furlongs off, it purls and gurgles once more amid the reeds. The

frogs keep up an incessant cry, tremulous and guttural; and now and then one of them plashes luxuriously into the cool water beneath the shadow of the bank. The cicala, in his bronze coat of mail, sends forth a shrill sound, like the springing of an infinitely tiny rattle made of the finest steel. It seems to be to the ear what the hot quivering of the air is to the eye, and to be equally suggestive of sunshine. Swarms of coloured butterflies flutter brightly around. Orange, crimson, blue, white, purple, yellow—if a rainbow could fall from the sky, and be scattered into a thousand fragments as it fell, it could shower down no bright tint these winged flowers would fail to match.

On the dry, dusty, crumbling paths that climb the hills bounding the valleys, the light beats fiercely. The grass is parched and sparsely grown, and dry. Here and there glitters a bunch of glaring yellow weeds, made bold and flaunting by the munificent sun, like a coarse favourite of fortune. Little cold bright-eyed lizards glide in and out of the chinks in the rough stone walls that flank the main roads. Some of the lizards are as green as emeralds. Others, again, are of the same hue as the brownest of the blocks of stone. Sometimes they will remain as motionless as the stone itself, gazing with their round, unwinking, black diamonds of eyes, until the passer-by might think that they were hardened and baked stiff and stony by the heat. But suddenly, at some sound or sight which startles it—or, it may be, from pure caprice—the little reptile flits away as swift and noiseless as a flash of light, and is gone.

Over the top of the wall tumbles a laden branch of roses, or the starry clematis. The wheat is high, and the green vines, full of leaf, hang richly on the pollard mulberry-stems. The grey olive stands up to his middle in a sea of grain. The corn and wine and oil all grow together on the same fertile field. Everything is steeped in sunlight. Only the olive's silvery foliage conveys a thought of coolness. It is always a moonlight tree. In the sultriest summer noontide, its soft grey tint, and the fantastic weirdness of its shadowy form (especially in the older trees, which have been scooped and cut until nothing but a seemingly unsubstantial shell of trunk remains to them), and the trembling, feathery plume of branches, recal the cold bright pallor of the moon, that makes the shuddering flowers so wan and bloomless when the night breeze ruffles their dewy breasts.

Drought and a sultry silence, which the cicala's cry seems but to emphasise, not break, prevail along the dusty road, as we wander along the Ema's course, further and still further away from the fair city of Florence, going eastward. Presently, with many a labouring creak and jar, comes lumbering by, a clumsy country cart, drawn by two of the colossal, dove-coloured Tuscan oxen. The driver—or he who should be driving, rather—lies asleep under a shady awning of matting at the bottom of his rude vehicle. The cart is one which might have been copied inch for inch from a Roman bas-relief, and has been copied through a long series of models from the cart that bore home the produce of the teeming Italian soil in Horace's day. The docile heavy beasts that draw it, turn their grand dark eyes askance upon the passenger as they meet him, and blow a fragrant breath from moist, ample nostrils.

Following the windings of the road, which now runs for a short space on the level, close to the Ema, we come to a steep ascent on the right, leading up to the summit of one of the highest eminences overlooking the valley. Instead of sloping gently down towards the river, as most of the neighbouring hills do, this one terminates on the side of the Ema in an abrupt precipice. The steep ascent before mentioned leaves the main highway to climb this height. The road is narrow, strewn thickly with great smooth pebbles, like the bed of a torrent, and only kept from crumbling bodily down into the valley in summer, or being washed away by the rain in winter, by horizontal lines of rough stone paving, placed like the rungs of a ladder, which succeed each other at wide intervals, and afford a foothold to any laden mule that may be driven up or down. To wheels, the road is quite inaccessible. Arrived on the summit, it turns abruptly to the left between high stone walls, within which the soil is so much higher than the road—a common circumstance in Tuscan farms—that the corn and wild flowers peep over the top of the wall, and the olives and fruit-trees rear nearly their whole height above it. The walls and the foliage shut out all glimpse of the view to right or left; but presently we come to an open space, a little piazzetta, and the wide landscape bursts upon us. It is so bright and airy and unexpected, that we feel as though we had come out of a dark room into the daylight. We are on the topmost ridge of a line of hills that slope down on either

hand—this way toward the Ema, that way toward the Arno.

Close, here in the foreground, is a tiny church with a low campanile, or bell-tower, on its roof. It is the church of Saint John in Jerusalem. But the neighbouring peasants know it by no other name than San Gersolé, that being the popular contraction of the ten syllables necessary to the pronunciation of San Giovanni in Gerusalemme. In front of the church lies the little piazzetta, bounded on the side opposite to the church-door by a low parapet wall, and entirely surrounded by huge cypresses. Beyond this parapet what a dream of purple hills, veiled slightly here and there by a silvery gauze of hot mist! What a widening plain, ever widening toward the sea, that is green near at hand, and then in the distance bluish-grey, and holds Arno, sleepily flowing on his course, brightening it with rare gleams reflected from the sky! What a vision of a city, whose house-roofs seem to press and throng like a holiday crowd, and of an awful dome, and soaring towers and spires, and churches and palaces, and old arched gateways, showing burnt and brown as colossal fragments of Etruscan pottery! What a dazzling speck of whiteness on the far horizon, that looks like a wandering cloud, but is the jagged line of the Carrara marble mountains many a mile away! What a strange melancholy charm as the eye explores the naked Appennine, discrowned long ages of his rich regal wreath of woods, rearing parched and crumbling heights to the relentless sun, and with black gashes of shadow where a deep ravine winds its mysterious way into the central stronghold of the hills! What a waveless sea of azure air, into whose limpid depths the very soul seems to plunge and float as we gaze! And subtly steeping all this in a flood of glory, what a divinely terrible, divinely beneficent, dazzling, flaming, white-hot sunshine!

Drought, and a sultry silence, shaking to the shrill song of the cicada, as we stand and gaze.

Suddenly a jangling bell breaks forth discordantly. Up in the square campanile of San Gersolé it is swinging in uneasy jerks—ting-tang, ting-tang, jingle-jangle jingle—without any rhythm.

Out of the dark little church comes a procession. Two priests; boys in white surplices swinging censers; men carrying a lofty crimson banner bearing the painted miracle of some saint; and some dozen or so of peasant men and women (the latter

largely predominating) in holiday attire, carrying missals, and shouting forth a Latin hymn in a quaint, monotonous chant. Round the little piazza they march solemnly, sending up curling clouds of incense into the leafy darkness of the cypresses, and jealously edging on to every inch of shade as they walk slowly, bare-headed, under the summer sky. Once, twice, three times, they make the circuit of the piazza. Then the dark church door swallows them again. The bell ceases to jangle, and the last whiff of incense floats away into the air.

Standing with San Gersolé on the left, and the parapet wall on the right, and looking straight before us, whither does the road lead?

"Nowhither," answers an old contadino, who has been tending his cows in a shed close at hand. Cows know no difference between work days and feast days; but need their fodder and litter all the same, though it be the festa of the saint whose legend is commemorated on the crimson banner. Therefore the old contadino has been tending them, with a large apron made of coarse blue linen tied over his holiday clothes. And if you ask him again whither the road leads, he will still answer "nowhither." You do not "come out," he says; the road leads nowhither, save—as if you press him hard with questions he will be driven to tell you—to the extreme edge of the precipice that overhangs the valley of the Ema.

But is there nothing, then, between San Gersolé and the edge of the precipice, save a strip of road leading nowhither? Ah, truly, yes: there is a garden; a large garden. And there is a house; a large house; the Villa Chiari. Oh, yes, as to that; yes, yes. But the road—what would you?—leads *nowhither*.

Proceeding along it, nevertheless, we reach a forlorn-looking, grass-grown space. The grass is burnt straw-colour, and a footpath is worn across it. The footpath shows the bare brown earth beaten and baked quite hard. Across it streams an endless procession of big black ants—as zealously busy a crowd pressing importantly along the road that "leads nowhither," as you shall ever have seen even in Fleet-street, London City. No other living thing is to be beheld, not even a butterfly; but the cicada still springs his tiny steel rattle in the sultry silence.

Before us is a high wall, whose plaster is crumbling and peeling off. There are

massive iron gates, worked by some cunning artizan of the old Florentine time, rusty and bent, and partly off their hinges. One-half of the gate stands open. It must have stood open this many a long day—many a long year, perhaps—for the grass has grown around it thickly, and one side of it is partly buried in the soil, and a colony of wild-flowers has sprung up in the shelter of its crooked shadow. On either side of the gate hangs down a tangled mass of leaves and branches clothing the unsightly wall, and nearly hiding a marble tablet—moss-grown and discoloured—whereon are graven the words “Villa Chiari,” surmounted by an elaborate coat of arms. The ivy, dog-rose, and honeysuckle, are all matted together, so as to form a thick screen over the tablet. But it matters the less, in that this is not the grand entrance to the house. No one enters by this old gate, save the contadini belonging to the adjacent farm. On the other side is a good road, well engineered, and mounting by due zigzags to a green painted gateway, and a gravelled sweep before the portico.

But that is a long way off, and there are some acres of garden ground between the road that “leads nowhither” and that which officially conducts to Villa Chiari.

In the old times many a lady’s palfrey, and many a churchman’s ambling mule, and many a rich litter borne by lackeys, and holding a luxurious Medicean noble, may have passed along the old steep way. Then, the fine scroll-work of the iron gates cast the black tracery of its shadow on fair faces and bright hair glistening in the sunshine, and made them fairer and more bright by contrast. And they, too, have gone their way along the road that “leads nowhither,” and the sculptured marble is white above their tombs, and the wild flowers twine fearlessly around the unhinged gate.

We pass the gateway and find ourselves in a neglected garden—neglected in this part of it, that is; for near the house the walks are rolled and weeded, and the flower-beds are as trim and bright as patterns in a kaleidoscope. But here are paths all overgrown with greenery; tangled thickets of laurestinum, lilac, rose, and oleander. There is a pergola, or trellis, covered with vines. And the eglantine and clematis and clinging honeysuckle have usurped its support, and pushed their fragrant faces peeringly *in here and there* amid the leaves and the *grape blossoms*. From the bosky gloom of

a grove of acacia and ilex-trees, thickly undergrown with laurel and lilac, comes the mellow fluting trill of a nightingale, like the perfume out of the heart of a rose. Now and again is heard the flutter of wings, as some little brooding bird stirs in his noonday dream, and then is still again. Onward we wander beneath the freshness of the pergola; then out again into the fiery air. Still onward, past a broken marble basin, once a fountain, where a tiny stream of water drips out of a crevice and makes a green track in the parched herbage; and where a harmless snake is sunning himself asleep. And we come to a deep blot of shadow that shows against the glare of the ground, like a black mountain tarn amid snow. The shadow is thrown from an ancient cypress that stands, lonely as a sentinel, upon the brink of the precipice, at the end of the road that “leads nowhither.” And in the shadow sits a lady, young and beautiful, looking out at the far-away Appenine, and quite alone.

CHAPTER II. VILLA CHIARI.

THE lady sitting in the shadow was Veronica. She wore a Tuscan hat with a wide flapping brim, such as the peasant women wear. And beneath it, her eyes gleamed and her cheeks glowed brighter than ever. She had wrapped a white burnous as fine as gossamer around her shoulders, and sat huddled together under the cypress with her elbows resting on her knees, and her cheeks resting on her hands. It was shady beneath the cypress, but it was not cool. No spot to which the hot sun-impregnated air had free access could be cool. Still, Veronica sat there looking out at the far-away barren Appenine, with her elbows resting on her knees, and her cheeks resting on her hands.

A man came through the garden towards her; a short, thick-set, grey-haired man, staid and respectful, who bared his head in the sunshine as he addressed her.

“Signora!” said the grey-haired man; and then stood still and waited.

Veronica neither turned her head nor her eyes towards him. But her colour rose a very little, and through her parted lips the breath came quicker.

“Miladi!” said the grey-haired man. No shade of difference could be discovered in his tone. It was the same to him, whether he used the one title or the other. If this lady preferred the English one, why should she not have it? He had learned

that she liked it best; but he was very far indeed from understanding why.

"What is it, Paul?"

"Pardon, miladi, but Sir John, on awaking from his siesta, demanded to know where you were; and when I told him that I supposed you were beneath the accustomed cypress, sent me to pray you to come in."

Paul spoke in Italian—which was nearly as much a foreign language as English to his Piedmontese tongue—and addressed her with perfect respect, but with an indefinable air of taking it for granted that she would comply with any expressed wish of Sir John's, which grated on the sensitive soreness of her haughty spirit.

"I am very well here, and shall remain," said Veronica, briefly. Then she turned her eyes away (she had never relinquished her careless attitude) and seemed to dismiss him from her thoughts.

"It is bad to stay here in the heat, miladi," returned Paul. He spoke with the same calm, imperturbable air of knowing his duty and doing it, which he had assumed towards Sir John Gale in the most irritable moments of his illness.

"I am in the shade," said Veronica. And when she had said it, she bit her lip at having been betrayed into what seemed like an excuse or apology.

Paul gravely unfurled a huge yellow sunshade lined with purple, which he had brought with him. It was characteristic of the man, and of the perfect sense he had of his own position, that, albeit his bare head was scorching in the glare, he had never thought of unfurling the sunshade for his own use.

It came into the month's wages to endure personal inconvenience of some sort. A little roasting, a little freezing, a little wetting—what mattered? There was that village up in the Alps, and there were the two boys waiting to be educated to a point that would make them independent of such disagreeable exertions and sacrifices.

Paul put up the yellow umbrella, and held it over Veronica's head; he seemed so absolutely certain that she would get up off the ground and come with him into the house, that she rose as though some spell were moving her limbs. Suddenly the wilful, spoiled-child mood came upon her, and she threw herself down again beneath the tree, saying, "Go and get me some cushions and a shawl. I shall stay here. I am enjoying the view."

"In the evening, signora—miladi—it is very fine here. Now, the sun will burn your

skin, and spoil your eyes. It is not like in England, miladi; at this hour in the summer, even up on a height like this, it is not good to be out in the sunshine. It makes the women look old soon. See our contadine!"

With this masterly stroke, Paul gravely bent down, hat in hand, and held his arm out for Veronica to lean on when she should rise—and she did rise.

Paul walked a pace behind her holding the umbrella, and they proceeded towards the house. Instead of passing beneath the pergola, they turned on reaching the old fountain—where their footsteps disturbed the snake, that slid away at their approach into the dry grass—to the left, and entered a path leading through a shrubbery. Here the walks were neat, the grass clipped, and the flowers duly tended. The grounds had not the fresh perfection of an English garden. There was a want of finish about all the details—the finish that comes from doing thoroughly whatever is done—but nature had filled the place with light, and colour, and perfume, and it was very lovely. At a turn in the path the house came in view. Villa Chiari was an old and vast building, solid, heavy, and with few windows in proportion to the great extent of wall-space. This circumstance, which would make a house gloomy in a northern climate, is suggestive only of grateful shade and coolness, to a dweller beneath Italian skies. Wealth had been unsparingly employed *within* the Villa to make it a comfortable and luxurious residence, in accordance with modern English ideas of what is comfortable and luxurious: but *without*, Villa Chiari remained much as it had been any time these three hundred years. It was covered with yellowish plaster. Situated as the house was, on a height, and fronting to the north, it had become much stained by wind and weather. The plaster was discoloured, cracked, and, in some places, had peeled off altogether, revealing a rough solid wall constructed of mingled brick and stone, after the Tuscan fashion. To each window were double wooden shutters or jalousies, painted green. These were open on the side of the house that was in shadow, and were carefully closed whenever the sun's rays beat against them like a flight of burning arrows. All the windows on the basement story were protected against more earthly assailants, by massive wrought-iron bars.

Immediately beneath each of the lower windows was a stone bench, the sad, grey colour of which was diversified by bright

lichens. A large archway, closed by double doors, in the centre of the façade, gave access to a paved courtyard open to the sky. Around the courtyard ran an open arcade—called here a *loggia*—and from it opened various doors leading to the interior of the dwelling. The roof was covered with ancient tiles, mellowed into a rich sombre brown by time and sunshine. And from it, at one end of the building, rose a square tower, also tiled, and with overhanging penthouse eaves.

There was something melancholy and forlorn in the exterior aspect of the house. The crumbling plaster, the shut *jalousies*, the moss-grown uneven pavement before the door, the brooding stillness that hung over the whole place—a stillness that seemed of death rather than sleep—were all depressing.

Paul held open a low door, beneath the *loggia*, for Veronica to pass.

She entered a shady corridor, whose marble pavement seemed icy cold to one coming from without. A moment ago she had longed for shade and coolness. Now, the air of the house struck chill, and she shuddered, drawing the cloak around her.

At the end of the corridor was a large saloon. The floor was still covered with a rich and very thick carpet, contrary to Italian usage, which requires that all carpets be removed from the marble or painted brick floors, in summer. There were luxurious chairs, and sofas, and ottomans; cabinets of rare workmanship and costly materials; silken hangings and gold-framed mirrors in the saloon. It had a lofty, vaulted ceiling adorned with colossal stucco garlands, white on a blue ground. The air was faint with the rich perfume of flowers, disposed in massive groups about the room; and only a dim sea-green twilight filtered in through the closed *jalousies*.

Sir John Gale was lying on a couch when Veronica entered. He rose when she appeared, took her hand, and led her to a chair. He was more high-shouldered than ever, and lean; and in the greenish light his face looked ghastly. Paul had followed Veronica to his master's presence, and had waited an instant; but at a wave of Sir John's hand he had withdrawn, closing the door noiselessly after him.

Veronica tossed her broad-brimmed hat on to an ottoman near her, and threw herself back in her chair with an air of consummate languor.

Sir John's eyes were accustomed to the dimness. He could see her better than she

could see him, and he watched her with a half-admiring, half-savage glance.

"You have been out," he said, after a silence of some minutes.

She slightly bent her head.

"I thought that you had been taking a siesta in your own apartments."

She made a negative sign without speaking.

"Am I not deemed worthy of the honour of a word?" asked Sir John; and though his mouth smiled as he said it, his eyebrows frowned.

"Too hot to talk!" murmured Veronica.

"If you had remained indoors, as I have so frequently advised, at this hour, you would not now have been overcome by the heat, which is, of course, my first consideration; and I should have enjoyed the pleasure of your conversation."

Veronica shrugged her shoulders, and smiled disdainfully.

"Well, perhaps you are right," said Sir John, answering the smile with a sneer Mephistopheles might have owned. "Perhaps you would not have made yourself agreeable if you *had* stayed in. But at all events you would have done more wisely for yourself. You positively run the risk of getting a coup de soleil by running out in this incautious manner!"

Veronica sighed a little impatient sigh, and pulling down a rich plait of her hair, drew its glossy length languidly across and across her lips.

"Magnificent!" said Sir John, softly, after contemplating her for some time.

She looked up inquiringly.

"Magnificent hair! Quantity, quality, and hue, all superb! I never knew but one other woman with such an abundance of hair as you have. And hers was blonde, which I don't admire."

The expression of his admiration had not lost its power to charm her. Indeed it may be said that to hear her beauty praised by any lips, however false and coarse, was now the one delight of her life. That the flattery was poisoned, she knew, as the drunkard knows what bane he swallows in each fiery draught. But she turned from it no more than he refrains from the fatal wine-cup. Her face brightened, and she coquettishly released all the coils of her hair with a sudden turn of her hand. It fell in plaits, or loose rippling tresses, all around her. Sir John looked on complacently with a sense of ownership.

"Will you drive this evening?" asked Veronica.

"Drive? I don't know. Where? There are no drives!"

"I want to go to Florence."

"To Florence!"

"You know you said I should do so, some day. I have never seen it. When we passed through from the railway station, it was dark. It is so dull here. Besides," she added, as if angry with herself for having assumed a pleading tone, "I want to go."

"There can be no necessity, Veronica. The servants will procure you anything you want."

"But I wish to see the city! Why should you not come?"

"What is the use of making me recapitulate my reasons? I am known there. You would be exposed to—to—disagreeable rencontres—in short, it is better not to go into Florence at present."

He spoke in an imperious tone of masterhood, and then sank back on his couch as though the discussion were closed. Veronica sat quite still for a minute or so. The minute seemed very long to her. She was trying to school herself to be politic, and to answer calmly. But self-control is not to be acquired in an instant.

Her own impulse of the moment, her own likes and dislikes, caprices, and whims, had been paramount with Veronica all her life. Now, after telling herself sternly, that it would not do to be hasty, and that everything depended on her power of self-command, she broke out on a sudden with childish vehemence; declaring that she was moped to death; that she was dull, wretched, bored, all day long; that if there were any reason for Sir John's shrinking from being seen in Florence, it rested with himself to remove that reason; that she was sick and weary of the delays and disappointments; finally that she *would* go to the city that evening.

At first Sir John listened to her petulant broken speech with the detestable enjoyment of a cruel school-boy, who watches his newly-caged bird fluttering in terror and impotent anger against the wires. But some word she said, touched on a theme which threatened to give him trouble.

That prospect was not amusing. Besides, Veronica looked very handsome so long as she was merely passionate and angry. But after the first outburst, symptoms of rising tears became apparent, and that prospect also was not amusing.

"Good Heavens, Veronica!" exclaimed Sir John. "How can you be such a baby?"

Go, go, if you like. If you care about it so much, order the carriage at any hour you please. Only let me suggest that it be not before the sun has begun to lose some of his power. It will be hot enough in any case in those narrow stuffy streets. Ouf!"

"And you?" said Veronica, standing looking at him irresolutely.

"Oh, I shall not go. You can take your maid, and Paul will attend you."

"I don't want Paul," muttered Veronica, but in so low and indistinct a tone that Sir John might plausibly affect not to hear it if he chose. And he did choose.

"Of course Paul will attend you," he repeated, quietly. "You will find Paul indispensable. That lot of a Tuscan coachman would get you into some scrape to a certainty."

All Sir John Gale's servants, with the exception of Paul and the cook, were Tuscans: not town-bred Florentines, but country people. Their service was clumsily rendered, but Sir John had known what he was about when he charged Paul to see that no servant accustomed to wait on foreigners, and to flit from house to house gossip-laden, was engaged among his domestics.

When the carriage was announced, there stood Paul, bare-headed, to hand "miladi" in. Her maid placed herself on the back seat, and Paul climbed up to the box beside the coachman.

"Where to, miladi?" asked Paul, leaning down, hat in hand.

"To Florence. Anywhere. I don't know. Stay; I want to buy a—a fan. Drive first to a place where they sell fans."

The carriage had not gone a quarter of a mile down the steep incline that led from Villa Chiari—it was down hill thence in every direction—when she called to Paul, and bade him make the coachman stop.

"I think," said she, with a not quite successful assumption of being an independent agent, "I think I will take a drive in the park—the Cascine they call it, don't they? Go there first."

Paul bent down lower into the carriage, and said, in English, "At the hour when we should arrive there, miladi, the Cascine would be terribly unwholesome. Sunset is a bad time, or even the hour before sunset. There is a mist. It is damp. You get colds—oh, very dangerous colds. Does miladi care which fan-shop she goes to?"

Veronica drew from her pocket a delicate gold watch encrusted with jewels, and

looked at it with a meditative air, while Paul was speaking.

"It is later than I thought," she said, slowly. "Tell the coachman to drive straight into town. I must buy my fan by daylight. Never mind the Cascine. Go on."

She looked very imperial and grand, leaning back in the handsome carriage, and folded in a soft cloud of black lace. Peasant women passed and stared at her. Peasant children shouted. Working men, returning from their daily labour, shaded their eyes to look at her, dashing by.

Paul sat, square-shouldered and steady, beside the coachman. And the pleasure of her weak, selfish vanity, and the petty delight of being admired and envied by poor ignorant passers, was dashed with a bitter drop—the consciousness that that man was invested with power to control her movements, and that, brave it out as she might, she was a slave, and Paul her keeper.

AS THE CROW FLIES.

DUE NORTH. LINCOLN TO SOMERSET.

IF old Harry really is in the habit of "looking over Lincoln," as the proverb says, then the crow looks over old Harry, for he is now perched with a fine view of wolds, heaths, and fens, high above the valley of the Witham, on the topmost grey pinnacle of one of the grand central towers of Lincoln cathedral. Upon six counties looks down the favoured bird; at his feet lies the damp amphibious Holland of England, the land of the grebe and tern, paradise of the wild duck, the city of refuge of the lapwing and water-hen; below him, indeed, lies more than this, there lies a region won from the sea by the hands and brains of men, a great conquest of man's mind over the brute forces that war against the progress of our race.

That original, but rather crotchety Lincolnshire antiquary, Dr. Stukeley, whom his friend Warburton called "a mixture of simplicity, drollery, absurdity, ingenuity, superstition, and antiquarianism," has some remarkable and ingenious theories about the origin of Lincolnshire, in which he takes us, as it were, into the very workshop of creation. He first notices that in England the eastern shore is generally flat and low, while the western is steep and rocky. In the same way mountains, *not only in Britain, but all over the world, are usually steep and abrupt to the west, and descend to gentle declivities on the*

east, while plains, as a rule, always descend eastward. The reason for this, says Stukeley, is, that when the half-solid earth began first its diurnal motion, the mountain part, still soft, flew westward, as the dirt, by its vis inertiae, will fly from a wheel in a contrary way to its motion. "Thus," says the amiable philosopher, with entire self-complacency, "it is that we have so large a quantity of this marsh land in the middle of the eastern shore of England, seeming as if made by the washing and sluices of the many rivers that fall that way, such as the Welland, the Witham, the Nene, the Ouse, great and little, together with many other streams of inferior note. These all empty themselves into the great bay formed between the Lincolnshire wolds and the cliffs of Norfolk, called by Ptolemy (reign of Hadrian) *Metaris Æstuarium*."

In October, 1571, a great tempest and inundation swept the wide, flat, green country over which the crow now casts his eye. Three score vessels were lost on the coasts of Boston and Grimsby. Three arches of Wansford-bridge were carried away by the sudden and devastating torrent. Poor "Master Pellam," of Mumby Chappell lost one thousand one hundred sheep; but then how could he stop to lament when all Mumby Chappell itself, but three houses and the church steeple, were destroyed? A strange thing, too, happened in this same Mumby, for a ship driving upon a rock, the frightened sailors took it for a rock, and leaping out of the foundering bark and clambering on the roof were saved. They also rescued the poor woman in the house who climbed up to them, when her husband and child were both drowned. Between Hummerston and Grimsby, one Mr. Specers lost a great number of sheep. The shepherd about noon came to his mistress and asked for his dinner; to which she replied, crossly, he should have none of her. Just at that moment the sharp-tongued shrew happened to look towards the marshes where her husband's sheep were, and saw the water break in with a fierce and irresistible rush. She said, chidingly, "He is not a good shepherd that would not venture his life for his sheep." Upon which the man ran to drive home the sheep; but he and they were all drowned, and when the inundation subsided the faithful fellow was found dead standing upright in a ditch, into which he must have fallen unawares. Four gentlemen of Kelsey and Mapletorpe, lost together about twenty thousand head of cattle. Dourne was overflowed

till the water reached half up the church. Steeking was wholly carried away, and a loaded waggon at that place was torn in two by the raging water.

The history of the drainage of the country now surveyed by our winged commissioner is a romance in itself. In James the First's time, a local jury decided against further draining; but in 1626 the king granted leave to Cornelius Vermuyden, a Zealander, who offered for a third part of all he could reclaim to retrieve seventy thousand acres in Axholm alone. The Van Peenens, Valkenburghs and Veenattis, rich merchants of Dort and Amsterdam, encouraged the adventure of their countryman, and his skilled Dutch and Flemish workmen soon got near the end of their work. The fen men became furious at the improvements. They complained of unjust distribution of the new lands, and of wilful injury done to the old. Openly countenanced by Portington, a turbulent justice of the peace, they frequently fell on the foreigners, broke down their new embankments, and burnt their obnoxious implements. The resolute Dutchman, who had checked the Thames at Dagenham, and had drained Windsor and Sedgemoor, was not, however, to be baffled by the stilt walkers of the fens. Vermuyden collected round him French Protestants from Picardy and Walloons from Flanders, refugees whose fathers had fled from the Duke of Alva, and settled in eastern England, along the edge of the fens, especially at Wisbeach, Whittlesea, Thorney, and Spalding. Slowly he carried the waters of the Sole into new deep channels for ever to be tributary to the Trent. The waters of the capricious Don were also forced henceforward to flow directly into the Ouse, near Goole. Farmers had no longer need to ferry from Axholm to Sandtoft, not again would a boat with coffin and mourners be lost when rowing from Thorney to Hatfield. Nor, on the other hand, would future time ever see the glorious sight that Prince Henry beheld, when five hundred deer were driven before his one hundred boats, from Hatfield to Thorney Mere. Unfortunately for the industrious Dutchman, one single error in his first plan rendered his whole life miserable. Vermuyden forced the Don at first through its northern channel alone into the river Aire. This cutting proved insufficient, and fresh lands were flooded. The people of the northern Don henceforward became the chief enemies of the improvement, and on some of Vermuy-

den's men killing one of the rioters, it led to fifty successive attacks on the works, till at last a royal proclamation read in Axholm by the sheriff, escorted by fifty horsemen, mingled with threats of fire and vengeance, led to some transient quietude. Vermuyden, though proud, resolute, and sometimes driven to retaliations by the stupid boors who did not know their own good, succeeded at last; in 1629, he was knighted by Charles the First, and took a grant from the crown of Hatfield Chase for the sum of sixteen thousand and eighty pounds, and an annual rent of one hundred and ninety-five pounds three shillings and fivepence-halfpenny, and one red rose.

The Dutch and German settlers were now allowed to build chapels in their villages. Still the conservative fen men remained turbulent and complaining. Their houses and farms were flooded, they said, their corn was washed away, their cattle were drowned, and the old rights of common cancelled. Unfortunately for Vermuyden, he had now either lost his temper or grown too arrogant and despotic. He threatened petitioners against him with the gallows, which indeed many of them richly deserved. He threw many offenders against his Dutchmen into York gaol. He ruthlessly stopped the old freeholders' privileges of cutting moor turf, till he had at last to restore many old rights, owing to the interference of Lord Wentworth, president of the North. Eventually Vermuyden washed his hands of ungrateful Lincolnshire altogether, and sold all his property there. In 1642, when the Royalists were threatening the fens, Cromwell's party broke the dykes, pulled up the flood-gates, and again laid Hatfield under water. The tide had turned, and henceforward all (except during short gleams of success) went ill with Sir Cornelius. He became involved in a spider's web of law-suits and found his way into prison. The Dutch speculators who had lost by the "Dutch Canal," also took legal proceedings against him. But indomitable as ever, in 1629 he commenced the great Bedford Level for the Earl of Bedford. The clamour against the brave, resolute, industrious Dutchman then grew louder than ever. The street ballads sung against the drainers contained such verses as the following :

Behold the great design, which they do now determine,
Will make our bodies pine, a prey to crows and vermine;
For they do meane all fens to drain and waters over-
master,
All will be dry, and we must die, 'cause *Raxex calvea*
want pasture.

Wherefore let us entreat our antient water-nurses
To show their power, to grant us t' help to drain their
purses;
And send us good old Captain Flood to lead us out to
battle,
The two-penny pack, with Scales on's back will drive
out all the cattle.

This noble captain yet was never known to fail us,
But did the conquest get of all that did assail us:
His furious rage none could assuage, but to the
world's great wonder,
He tears down banks, and breaks their cranks and
whirligigs asunder.

Still the Dutchmen plied their spades, and Charles the First urged forward the work, which was however stopped by the agitation aroused by Oliver Cromwell, "Lord of the Fens," as he was called, who urged the gross exactions of the royal commission and the inevitable plunder that would fall on the helpless smaller proprietors at the great man's voice. The work stopped, and the Earl of Bedford died poor. In 1649, the new earl and Vermuyden again set to work, afterwards aided by Cromwell's Scotch and Blake's Dutch prisoners, and by 1653 forty thousand acres of land were reclaimed. There are now in Lincolnshire and the Great Bedford Level sixty-one thousand acres of reclaimed land, worth on an average four pounds an acre. Ely is now healthier than Pan, sheep feed where fish once floated, the fen men are no longer savages, more irreclaimable than their fever-haunted marshes. The fate of poor Vermuyden was sad indeed. During the civil wars he had sold all his lands in Dagenham, Hatfield, Sedgemoor, Malvern, and the Bedford Level, to pay his Dutch workmen. The ungrateful company then preferred heavy pecuniary claims against him. He could not meet them, and in 1656 appeared before parliament, four years after the completion of his great work, as a suppliant for redress. It is supposed that he soon after went abroad and died, a poor, heart-broken old man. Yet Vermuyden did a brave work and he left large-brained descendants. Through the Babingtons (the mother's side) the late Mr. Macaulay was descended from this patient, far-seeing Dutchman.

From High Burnam, in the isle of Axholm, the furthest object is the bright heaven-pointing spire of Loughton-en-le-Morthen, that Norman hill village which the Sheffield people, who see the spire shine in the daybreak, call prettily "Lighten in the Morning;" but from the Rood Tower of Lincoln the crow sees not only Hatfield Chase, which Vermuyden won from the water, but the blue Yorkshire wolds on

the other side of the Humber, and the hills about Aldborough and Burton; indeed, much of Yorkshire and all that amphibious country, which old Fuller quaintly compares in shape "to a bended bow, of which the sea makes the back, the rivers Welland and Humber the two horns, and the river Trent the string."

Lincoln Cathedral, once the throne of a vast see, that embraced Ely, Oxford, and Peterborough, is in itself a history of Gothic art, from early Saxon to late pointed. Begun by Bishop Remigius, to resemble Rouen, in 1075, it was partly rebuilt by Bishop Alexander, after a fire in 1123-47. St. Hugh built the east transept, chapels, choir, chapter-house, and east front of the western transept; Hugh of Wells, in 1206-35, completed the nave, the late geometrical decorated cloisters, and the rood screen, begun in the reign of Edward the First. It was just after this Hugh of Wells had put by his hods and trowels (in 1237), that as one of the canons was preaching on the unseemly feuds then raging between the chapter of Lincoln and the bishop, having taken the very appropriate text, "Were we silent the very stones would cry out," the central tower, perhaps too hastily built by Remigius, fell with the crash of an earthquake, shaking the very foundation of the building. Many thought the end of the world had come, but the strong-nerved canon, quite unmoved, continued to thunder forth his sermon against the enemies of the peace-makers. This tower Bishop Grosteste (1237-54) rebuilt, and also the east tower. D'Alverly added the wooden spire, Lexington and Oliver Sutton the beautiful angel choir, Alnwick the great west window, Wren the pagan Doric cloister, and the James the First clergy the big bell of the central tower.

Grosteste, the prelate who partly rebuilt the central tower, was almost as great a man as Roger Bacon, of whom he was a contemporary. He seems to have been at once a reformer, a logician, a theologian, a linguist, a poet, and a philosopher. One of the first English scholars to study Aristotle in the original Greek, he was also one of the pioneers in Hebrew learning. He did not reach such a pitch of learning as Roger Bacon, who seems to have had more than foreshadowings both of steam and gunpowder, but he believed in the possibility of transmuting metals, as Bacon did, and he, no doubt, laboured hard, as Bacon laboured, at the

discovery of machinery. The mediæval legend, indeed, ran that, like the "Doctor Mirabilis," Groteste constructed a metal head that would answer questions. Richard de Bardney, indeed, boldly asserts that the fragments of Groteste's talking bronze head, of which Gower sings, are still hidden somewhere in the vaults of Lincoln.

There is also a legend of St. Hugh, bishop in part of the same reign. At the death of this holy man the unseen world trembled with such sympathy that

A' the bells o' merrie Lincoln
Without men's hands were rung ;
And a' the books o' merrie Lincoln
Were read without men's tongue ;
And ne'er was such a burial
Sin' Adam's days begun.

There is a legend at Canterbury not unlike this, for the bells there rang they say of their own accord when Becket fell before the altar, and Mr. Walcott observes that at Cœur de Lion's coronation the bells at Westminster, as the monks report, rang by angel hands at Compline. This same St. Hugh has a chantry chapel all to himself in the south-west corner of the east aisle of the choir transept at Lincoln. In 1280 he was translated to the presbytery, where John the Baptist's altar stood, and where the angel choir strike for ever their golden harps. The king, the queen, the archbishop, seven prelates, and six abbots, led the procession at this translation.

But the crow's readers must not confound this honoured man with the other hero of Lincoln cathedral legends, namely, *Sir Hugh*, that little harmless boy, who, it was firmly believed, some wicked Jews trepanned as he was playing, and crucified in secret in ridicule of the great mystery of our Christian faith. There is no basis for the legend ; but in the times of persecution the Jews were suspected of endless iniquities, and anything was believed against the poor sufferers of the "wandering foot and weary eye." True, or not true, however, *Sir Hugh* gave rise to one of Chaucer's most beautiful tales, and to that old Percy ballad :

The bonny boys of merrie England
Were playing at the ba',
And wi' them stood the sweet *Sir Hugh*,
The sweetest of them a'.

Perhaps the most wonderful relic at Lincoln of past time is that conundrum in stone, the *Centenarian Beam*, an instance of the almost supernatural ingenuity and daring originality of the old Gothic architects, only equalled by the triangular bridge at Crowland. The beam is formed of twenty-

three blocks of stone adjoining the two towers. The stones (of unequal size), are eleven inches in depth. The beam is twenty-nine and a quarter feet long, twenty-one inches broad. This strange vibrating bow of elastic stone, cemented solely by lateral pressure, was designed to exactly and for ever gauge the settlement of the towers. It seems the work of a magician. Surely good Bishop Groteste's bronze head must have disclosed it to the wise and pious builder.

The lives of the Bishops of Lincoln form a History of England in themselves. The crow takes them in rude sequence. Remigius, the first Norman prelate, was the priest who urged William the Conqueror to record his gratitude for the crowning victory of Hastings by erecting Battle Abbey. He built a hospital for lepers at Lincoln, and is said to have fed daily for three months in every year one thousand poor persons. Robert Blovet, the second Norman bishop, fell dead at Woodstock as he was riding with Henry the First. The successor of Blovet, a chief justice of England, roused Stephen's jealousy by building three castles, and pleased the monks by rearing four monasteries. St. Hugh, who came four prelaties afterwards, was borne to his grave by King John of England and King William of Scotland, who happened to be both at Lincoln when the sainted body arrived. Ascetic Hugh might have been, but he certainly was fanatic, for he dug up the body of poor Fair Rosamond, and cast it out of Godstow nunnery, to which she had been a benefactress. Presently appeared Groteste, who is said to have written two hundred works (many still in manuscript, no enterprising publisher as yet looming in the distance). His hatred of interloping Italian priests led to his excommunication by the Pope. Groteste's apparition, according to the learned Bale, appeared to Pope Innocent at Naples, but why, or with what result, has not reached us. There is a ghost story, too, about Bishop Burwash (Edward the Second), for plundering oxen and stealing poor men's land ; his repentant ghost used subsequently to haunt Tinchurst Common, not mitred, but in the outward semblance of a green clad verderer, till the Lincoln canons made restitution, and laid the perturbed and restless spirit. But we have forgotten Robert de Chisney, that prodigal young Norman (died 1167), who in compensation for having impaired the revenues of the diocese, built nearly all the palace at Lincoln.

and also the episcopal house at Lincoln's-inn. Then there arose Fleming, founder of Lincoln College, Oxford, who threw Wycliffe's ashes into the Swift to be carried round the world; Chadeston, who preached a sermon against marriage at Cambridge, in which he compared a good wife to an eel hid in a barrel of snakes; Barlow, whom the Puritans called "the barley loaf;" Sanderson (Charles the First), the last bishop who wore a moustache; Barlow the second, nicknamed Bishop of Buckden, because he never once visited his cathedral; and, last of all to deserve record, Bishop Thomas, who married five times.

And now a word for poor cracked Great Tom, the third largest bell in England. The verger may well call it, in punning slang, "a stunner," for it weighs four tons fourteen hundredweight, and holds four hundred and twenty-four gallons ale measure: a tall man might stand upright in it. The "mighty Tom" of Oxford, overweighs Lincoln by three tons, the Exeter Goliath by two tons, and "Tom Growler," the giant of St. Paul's, by one ton. Canterbury, Gloucester, and Beverley, rank after these four mammoths. Lincoln Tom was always dangerously big for the tower; but it used to boom out over the fens when the judges entered the city. It only dates back to the eighth year of James the First, and it was cast in the minster yard, so it has never travelled far.

And now, though faithfully believing that the cathedral was made expressly for his perch, the crow strikes eastward towards Horncastle. Here are "the glooming flats," "the lonely poplars trembling in the dusk," and here in the dark fen the oxen low as once round Mariana's moated grange. A lane at Winceby, up in the rounded wolds, five miles east of Horncastle, is still called "Slash Lane," a record of a "short, sharp fight," as Mr. Walter White tersely calls it, during the civil wars. It was here Sir Ingram Hopton's cavalry met Cromwell. It indeed went hard with Oliver, whose charger was shot under him as he led the van of the Ironsides. He had scarcely struggled from his dying horse when a Cavalier (probably Sir Ingram) felled him again; but Cromwell shook himself sullenly, mounted another horse, and routed the Cavaliers. It was all over in half an hour. Charles's men were *slashed* down the lane, and shot and cut down at every hedge and gate. Many were drowned in the ditches and quag-

mires, and brave Sir Ingram was slain with the rest. He now lies in Horncastle church, and is described in his epitaph as having fallen "in the attempt of seizing the arch-rebel in the bloody skirmish near Winceby." This storm cleared the air, for immediately after the rough *melée* in Slash Lane, Bolingbroke Castle surrendered to the Parliamentarians, and Lincolnshire was freed from the king's freebooters.

Past Spilsby, where the father of Sir John Franklin was a small draper, the crow comes to Somersby, where our great modern poet, Tennyson, was born. The scenery is described as a warm wooded vale, a streamlet meandering by a mill, a curving road overshadowed by elms; a deep lane beset with grand trees, and a clear spring reflecting the ferns that edge its brink, border the hill on which the vicarage of the poet's father stands. It is a comfortable, plain, but not picturesque house, screened from the road by large chesnut-trees. There are still the poplars behind the house, and the brook of which the laureate sings with such tenderness in his *Ode to Memory*.

DONALD MACLEOD.

DONALD MACLEOD! Wouldn't hear his story told?
No stormy legend of the days of old,
Of war and tournament and high emprise,
Or knightly feuds beneath fair ladies' eyes;
But a true story of our modern time,
Such as befel, in cold Canadian clime
A dozen winters past. Donald MacLeod,
A poor man—one of millions—in the crowd.

A stalwart wight he was, whom but to see
Were to wish friend rather than enemy;
A smith by trade, a bluff, hard-working man.
Proud of his aires, his race, his name, his clan.
His strong right arm could hurl a focman down
Like ball a skittle; his broad brow was brown
With honest toil, and in his clear blue eye
Lurked strength to conquer fortune or defy.
Few were his words, and those but rough at best,
But truthful ever as his own true breast;
Of homely nature, not of winning ways,
Or given to tears, or overmuch of praise;
But with a heart as guileless as a child's
Of seven years old that frolics in the wilds.

Ere Donald left his shieling in the glen,
By the burn-side that tumbles down the Ben
On grey Lochaber's melancholy shore,
And sighed, like others, "I return no more,"
To try his fortune in the fight of life
In a new world, with fairer field for strife
Than Scotland offers, overfilled with brains,
Yet scant of acres to reward their pains,
He woo'd with simple speech a Highland maid,
Sweet as the opening flow'et in the shade,
And asked her, "Would she quit her native land,
Her mother's love, her father's guiding hand,
And make another sunshine far away,
For him alone?" She blessed the happy day
That a good man, so honest and so brave,
Had sought the heart and hand she freely gave.

To see the pair, the man so massive strong,
The maid so frail, yet winsome as a song,
You might have thought the oak had chosen for bride
The gowan glinting on the green hill-side.

And Jeanie Cameron! happy wife was she,
Sailing with Donald o'er the summer sea,
And dreaming, as the good ship cleft the foam,
Of independence and a happy home
On that abundant and rejoicing soil
That asks but hands to recompense their toil.
And Fortune favoured them, as Fortune will
All who add strength and virtue to good will.
And Donald's hands found always work to do,
Work well repaid, which, growing, ever grew;
Work and its fair reward but seldom known
In the old land, whence hopeful he had flown;
Work all sufficient for the passing day,
With something left to hoard and put away.
Content and Donald never dwelt apart,
And Love and Jeanie nestled at his heart.

In summer eves, his face towards the sun,
He loved to sit, his long day's labour done,
And smoke his pipe beneath the sycamore,
That cast cool shadow at his cottage door,
And hear his bonnie Jean, like morning lark,
Or nightingale preluding to the dark,
Sing the old Gaelic melancholy songs
Of Scotland's glory, Scotland's rights and wrongs
Of true-love ditties of the olden time,
Breathing of Highland glens and moorland thyme.

Thus years wore on. Their sky seemed sunny blue
Without a cloud to shade the distant view
Of happiness to come. A child was born,
Fresh to the father's heart as light of morn,
Sweet to the mother's as a dream of Heaven,
A blessing asked, but scarcely hoped when given.
Most dearly prized! Alas! for human joy,
That Fortune never builds but to destroy!
The child was purchased by the mother's health!
And Donald's heart grew heavy, as by stealth
He gazed and saw the sadness in her smile
That lit, yet half extinguished it the while;
For, ah! poor Jeanie was too fair and frail
To bear unscathed Canadia's wintry gale;
And hectic roses flourished on her cheek,
Filling his heart with grief too great to speak.

Long, long, he watched her, and essayed to find
Comfort and hope. At last upon his mind
Burst suddenly the thought that he'd forego
All he had earned in that New World of woe,
And bear her back, ere utterly forlorn,
To the moist mountain clime where she was born,
To dear Lochaber and the Highland hills,
And wave-invaded glens and wimpling rills,
Where first he found her! Late, alas! too late!

"Donald," she said, "I feel approaching fate,
And may not travel o'er the stormy sea,
To die on shipboard and be torn from thee;
Here let me linger till I go to rest!
Time may be short or long, God knoweth best.
But as the tree that's planted in the ground,
And sheds its blossoms and its leaves around,
Dies where it lives, so let me live and die
Where thou hast brought me, 'twixt the earth and sky.
I'd not be buried in th' Atlantic wave,
But in brown earth with daisies on my grave;
Fresh blooming gowans from Lochaber's brags,
With Scottish earth enough, the mound to raise
Above my head. Donald! let this be done
When your poor Jeanie's mortal race is run!"

The strong man wept. "Jeanie!" was all he said.
"Oh, Jeanie! Jeanie!" and he bowed his head,
And hid his face behind his honest hands,
The saddest man in all those happy lands.
"Jeanie!" he said, "ye maunna, maunna dee,
And leave the world to misery and me!"

"Donald!" she answered, "woeful is the strife
That my warm heart is fighting for its life,
And much as I desire for thy dear sake,
And the wee bairn's, to live till age o'er take,
I feel it cannot be. God's will is all,
Let us accept it whatsoe'er befall!"

And Jeanie died. She had not lain i' the mools*
Three days ere Donald laid aside his tools,
And closed his forge, and took his passage home
To Glasgow, for Lochaber o'er the foam.
Alone with Sorrow and alone with Love,
The two but one to lead his heart above;
And long ere forty days had ran their round,
Donald was back upon Canadian ground;
Donald, the tender heart, the rough, the brave,
With earth and gowans for his true love's grave.

WITCHCRAFT IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

A RECENT trial for witchcraft—or, at least, fraudulent fortune-telling—suggests the unpleasant reflection that the belief in witches still exists to a very considerable extent in England. We do not, it is true, hear of it much in the busy towns; because there is not so much gossiping rumour in them as in country places, and because the people, with all their shortcomings, are a little less ignorant. Nevertheless, the ignorance still displayed in the nineteenth century may well occasion surprise, and suggest inquiries concerning that said school-master who is declared to be "abroad." In London, the credulity is chiefly among servant girls, who give their sixpences to fortune-tellers for information on certain important questions about "dark men," "fair men," and the like. The line of division between fortune-telling and witchcraft being a very slight one, we need not be surprised that the credulous often step over this boundary, and commit themselves to the most gross and absurd impositions.

In a case tried at Stafford in 1823, one Sarah Roxborough was charged with the following piece of roguery. She announced to a tradesman's wife at Hanley, that she could "rule the planets, restore stolen goods, and get in bad debts." On one particular day, the wise woman appeared at the tradesman's house, and began her professional incantations. She desired the wife to have a fire kindled in an upper room; to obtain from her husband twenty-five one-pound notes, or five five-pound notes; to place the notes in her bosom; and to let them remain there till nine o'clock in the evening. The credulous wife did as she was directed. The woman Roxborough came again later in the day, went up-stairs, and sent the wife down for some pins and some

* Scotches—the mould, the earth.

of her husband's hair. She then asked for the notes, saying she could not get on without them. The wife hesitated a little, but at length gave them. Sarah, after putting a little of the husband's hair into each note, and folding them up, made a small bundle of them, which she put on a chair. The wife, having some misgivings, wanted the notes returned; but the deceiver declared that the charm would fail unless the notes remained a few minutes in the chair. Sarah then told her silly dupe to stand in the middle of the room, throw pins into the fire, and watch till they were consumed. While this was doing, the knavish woman watched for an opportunity to take up the roll of notes, and deposit in its place a small paper parcel of similar size and appearance. This, however, was not so adroitly done as to escape the notice of the wife; suspicion was aroused, the husband was called up-stairs, the impostor was searched, given into custody, tried, and imprisoned. The cheat was of the most vulgar kind, but it sufficed to show the intense credulity of the person duped.

No longer ago than 1857, a trial at the Stafford Assizes exhibited a farmer and his wife in such a light as would appear almost incredible, were it not that the narrative came from their own lips. The farmer, Thomas Charlesworth, lived at Rugby. He married in 1856, against his mother's wish; she quitted his roof, and gave him a mysterious caution not to make cheese, as it would be sure to crumble to pieces. This warning seemed to imply that the young wife would bewitch the dairy; but the farmer's evidence did not tend to show what he himself believed in this matter. Very shortly, everything seemed to go wrong; the cheese would not turn out properly; the farmer, his wife, and the dairymaid, all became unwell. In this predicament he sought the advice of a neighbouring toll-gate keeper, who suggested that he should apply to a "wise man," named James Tunnicliff. The farmer and his wife started off, visited the wise man, told their story, and obtained a promise that he would come to the farm on the following day. He did come. His report startled the poor farmer. Mr. and Mrs. Charlesworth, the maid, all the horses, all the cows, the farm, and the cheese vat, were pronounced to be bewitched. A regular tariff was named for the disenchantment—five shillings for each human being, five shillings for each horse, three-and-sixpence each cow, five shillings for the cheese vat, &c.—until the poor dupe had

paid as much as seven pounds. No good result followed; the cheese was no better than before; and the inmates of the farm were (or fancied themselves to be) very much out of condition. They believed they heard at night strange noises, the bellowing of cattle and the howling of dogs. Tunnicliff now asserted that the whole commotion was due to the influence of Charlesworth's mother over certain wizards living at Longton, Burton-on-Trent, and Derby; and that to counteract this baneful influence a large outlay of money would be needed. The farmer gave him an additional sum of thirty pounds. Still, there was no improvement. And now occurred the strangest proof of deception on the one hand, and credulity on the other. The farmer took the knave Tunnicliff into his house, and allowed him to live there, eleven months! The rogue lived an easy life, and fed on the best that the farm afforded. Sometimes he would make crosses on all the doors with witch hazel; and sometimes he would burn blue lights, to overcome the powers of the evil one. The farmer deposed in evidence, that one night he was taken ill; that he heard a sound like that of a carriage in the yard, and another like a rush of wind through a passage; that the house-dog entered the room, followed by "the shape of another dog all on fire;" that after the farmer had said the Lord's Prayer, the fiery dog disappeared, but the house-dog stayed, with his tongue hanging out and his paws hanging down. The mistress and the maid had both of them something to say concerning this fiery dog. After this extraordinary hallucination had continued nearly a year, even the obtuse mind of the farmer began to open to the possibility that the wise man had been making a dupe of him. He consulted a lawyer, and the lawyer collected evidence sufficient to bring upon Tunnicliff a sentence of twelve months' imprisonment with hard labour, "for obtaining money under false pretences." But the evidence was not sufficient to show how far, or in what way, he had produced the appearances and the noises which had so much assisted to keep up the cheat.

The obstinate milk of a cow was the primary cause of this absurd exhibition of ignorance; and such an event has not unfrequently led to applications to fortune-tellers and wise men. Early in the present century there was a case in point, ludicrous in its commencement but tragical at its close. A cow belonging to a tailor ceased to yield milk, and the tailor's wife believed that the animal was bewitched. She assembled

twelve women at her house and got them all to solemnly bless the cow; but still no milk came. She then applied to one Mary Butters, a fortune-teller. This woman advised that the tailor and another man should go to the cow-house, turn their waistcoats inside out, and stand by the head of the cow till the milk came. The two simpletons did as they were directed, and remained in the cow-house many hours; but as the cow continued as dry as ever they returned to the house. Finding doors and windows closed, and observing a strange silence everywhere, they forced an entrance, and saw within the house the tailor's wife, her son, and an old woman, all lying dead, together with Mary Butters in a very exhausted state. In this case there is reason to believe that the witch, or fortune-teller, was to a certain degree sincere in her witchery; she had shut herself up in the house with the three other persons, had closed every crevice, and put a pot on the fire containing pins, needles, crooked nails, a little milk, and (it is supposed) a little sulphur. The fumes had suffocated her wretched companions, and had nearly made an end of herself too.

An inquiry that came before the Bethnal-green Police Court, in 1856, exhibited the metropolis in nearly as unfavourable a light as the country districts. The wife of a coppersmith, suffering under illness and anxiety, was told by some of her neighbours that she had a "spell" upon her, and was recommended to go to a "wise woman" named Sarah M'Donald; seeing that a medical man had failed to cure her. The wise woman told her that "some person was doing her an injury," and that the remedy would be the burning of ten powders. The dupe purchased the powders, at sixpence each, of M'Donald, who threw them into the fire, where they "cracked, and burned, and blazed, and bounced." The wise woman muttered some words, which were supposed to be part of a charm or incantation. The silly wife repeated these visits seven or eight times, always unknown to her husband. It came out in the course of the investigation that the magic powder was only common salt; but, even then, the dupes (for the woman's daughter had also fallen into the snare) believed that the wise woman could "remove the spell" if she chose: indeed, the complaint before the magistrate was, not that she had done wrong, but that she *would* not do what she *could*. The credulity was rendered the more strange by the fact that the tradesman's wife belonged to a *good family, moving in a circle of*

society where the witch theory is not usually countenanced.

In 1825 a curious proof was afforded of the popular belief in a "sink-or-swim" method of detecting a wizard. At Wickham Keith, in Suffolk, there dwelt one Isaac Stebbing, a small, spare, elderly man; he was a huckster, or dealer in small cheap wares. Near him dwelt a thatcher, whose wife became more and more silly as she advanced in years; while another neighbour, a farmer, also showed signs of mental weakness. The gossips of the village deeming it strange that there should be two silly persons among them, took refuge in the theory of witchcraft or necromancy, and sought about for some one who had done the mischief. The poor huckster was fixed upon. One cottager asserted that, while using the frying-pan one evening, Isaac Stebbing was seen to dance up to the door. This, it seems, is one of the tests of wizard tactics; but Stebbing stoutly denied having done anything of the kind. Thereupon rose a charge that he had once called upon a neighbour with mackerel for sale, at four o'clock in the morning, before the family were up—another proof of black magic; he admitted having called at the hour named, but only as a dealer, and denied all complicity with wizards. Not yet satisfied, the villagers ascertained from a cobbler that one day his wax would neither melt nor work properly, and that Isaac Stebbing passed his door at the very instant when this occurred, a sure proof (in the cobbler's estimation) that the huckster had bewitched the wax. The villagers, having their minds preoccupied with the belief that Stebbing was a wizard, did not like to be baffled, and proposed that the sink-or-swim test should be applied. The poor fellow consented. There was a large pond called the Grunner, on Wickham-green, and around this pond, on a certain day, a strong muster of villagers assembled. Four men were appointed to walk into the water with Isaac, and the parish constable attended to keep the peace. Stebbing, wearing only his coat and breeches, walked into the pond, attended by the four men; and when they had waded about breast high, they lifted him up and laid him flat on his back on the surface of the water. Now it is known to bathers that when the lungs are moderately inflated, the human body weighs a little less than an equal bulk of water; and that a person can at such a time float on the surface, provided he keeps perfectly still. Whether the

huckster was aware of this, is not recorded; but he *did* float—rather to the disappointment of the wizard hunters. They called out, "Give him another!" and again did he remain so quiet as to float when placed on the surface of the water. Not yet satisfied, they cried out, "Try him again: dip him *under* the water!" and under he went, head down and heels up; but speedily recovering himself, he floated as before. The old man was more dead than alive when he had borne these repeated duckings for three quarters of an hour, and he hoped that his neighbours would be satisfied with the result. But they were not; they wished their wizard theory to be justified, even if the poor fellow's life had been sacrificed as a consequence. It was gravely proposed that "another man of his age and size ought to be made to swim with him." What this meant, we are not told; but they had probably begun to suspect the nature of his floating power. One Tom Wilden, of Hacton parish, was selected as the second man; and on the next following Saturday, nearly all the inhabitants of both villages assembled around the pond. By this time, however, the clergyman and churchwardens had heard of the affair, and forbade the further prosecution of the monstrous ordeal.

Do the last two or three years afford any indication that these degrading displays of ignorance have vanished from among us? At Stratford-on-Avon, in October, 1867, a whole family were smitten with a belief (so astonishing as to be itself almost unbelievable) that hideous headless men and women were in the habit of coming down the chimneys during the night, pinching the inmates of the house, making horrible noises, and even turning the people out of their beds. A theory sprang up in the family that they were all bewitched by a neighbour, Jane Ward, and that the shedding of some of Jane's blood would be necessary to the removal of the spell. The father forthwith gave poor Jane a gash in the cheek with a knife, whereupon the family obtained, as they declared, peaceful nights. But a trial at the Warwick Assizes taught the deluded man that his peculiar mode of getting rid of witches was not exactly in accordance with the laws of England.

Again. At Newbury, in Berks, in February, 1868—last year—one Isaac Rivers having lost his watch, applied to a "cunning woman," named Maria Giles, to help him in his troubles. She received half-a-crown as payment for allowing him to look into a glass something like those used in bird-

cages, in which he was to see the face of the man who had possession of the watch. The noodle fancied he "saw whiskers," but no face. A few days afterwards he gave her nine shillings and sixpence, wherewith to buy some "doctors' stuff," which was to assist in the search. A second time did he give her a similar sum of nine shillings and sixpence, for a similar purpose; but he saw neither doctors' stuff nor watch. On a fourth occasion the simpleton gave her twenty-five shillings (unless the watch were a gold one, he must have about paid its full value by this time), and he was bidden to remain indoors until, at midnight, Maria should bring him the man who possessed the watch. The simplicity with which he afterwards assured a magistrate that he did wait indoors, and that the people did *not* come with the watch, was something to marvel at.

At Cuckfield, in October, 1868, a married woman, being ill, applied to a "cunning man" to ascertain whether she was bewitched. A midnight meeting, a book of necromancy, a pair of tongs, some new pins, and a great deal of ceremonial ejaculation and jargon somehow failed either to bring the witch to light or to cure the illness.

In November, 1868, at Tunbridge Wells, a woman, jealous of her husband, applied to a fortune-teller to reveal whether there were grounds for her jealousy. A bargain was made, that, for one shilling to buy doctors' stuff, the fortune-teller should bewitch a certain other woman who was supposed to have led the husband astray, and should give her "excruciating pain." Somehow or other, the wife herself was in great pain that same night, and then indicted the fortune-teller for having bewitched the wrong person. At Maidstone Assizes the charge settled down into the more definite one of obtaining a shilling under false pretences.

Enough. Newspaper readers may remember still more recent instances of the same kind.

IN GREAT GOLFINGTON.

"CAN you play, my lad?" said I to the Caddie who was carrying my clubs for me at the noble (I beg pardon of all true golfers, the *royal*) game of golf; which I was practising, or rather, learning, on the breezy links of the old city of Great Golfington.

"Oo, aye," he replied in broad Fifeshire Scotch, "but no ower weel. I'm just a beginner like yoursel."

When this little conversation occurred, I was out amid the "benty knowes," the "whin bushes," and the "bunkers" of the most famous golfing ground in the world, in the company of an accomplished golfer who was endeavouring to initiate me into the mysteries. Before proceeding further it will be well to explain the words "caddie" and "golf." "Caddie" in Scottish parlance originally meant a lad or youth, from the French *cadet*. The word now signifies (and signified in Humphrey Clinker's time) a man or boy employed to run errands, or do light jobs of porters' work. A "caddie" must not be confounded with a *cad*, for *cad* implies snobbishness and vulgarity, and a caddie may be a very honest fellow. Indeed, caddies, as a rule, are hard-working respectable people, and as such superior to a *cad*, even if the *cad* should happen to be called "your lordship."

"Golf," pronounced goff, is the game par excellence of Scotsmen, and flourishes in every part of the world to which Scotsmen resort and where the climate is not too tropical to admit of vigorous exercise in the open air. Wherever any considerable number of Scots, at home or abroad, reside in a town or city, contiguous to a moor, a heath, a common, or a strip of land by the seashore, large enough for the sport, they are sure to be seen in the summer and autumnal afternoons, or the half holidays snatched from their businesses (in which, as most people know, they generally manage to do pretty well), attired in red coats, that they may know each other in the distance, their caddies following with a due supply of clubs of all weights and calibres. These hearty Scots are engaged in the to them delightful task of sending a hard gutta-percha ball flying through the air, towards a hole at a mile's or half a mile's distance, and gradually diminishing the vigour of their blows, as they approach nearer the hole of their ambition. Most Londoners who have visited Greenwich, must at some time or other have observed the cheery gentlemen who enjoy this sport at Blackheath. The place is somewhat too crowded, however, by nursery maids and donkeys to allow fair scope for the game—but better a crowded heath than no heath at all, to the inveterate golfer. Those, too, whose travels in Scotland have led them beyond the show-places and the beaten tracks of the summer tourists, or who have resided in Edinburgh or its neighbourhood, must have made acquaintance with the golfers, either at the links of Brantsfield, Leith, Musselburgh, or

Innerleven. If, as King James in the *Fortunes of Nigel* advised young Lord Glenvarloch to do, they have "turned their nebs northwards and settled for awhile at St. Andrews," they will have seen golf in all its glory, and if they read these pages will not consider inappropriate the new name which I have taken the liberty to bestow upon the venerable city.

Nobody knows when the Scotch first took to this sport; but the word, derived from the Saxon *Kolb*, and the Danish *Kolv*, a club or mace, points to the game as an introduction from the European continent at that early period of Scottish history when the Scandinavians effected a settlement upon the eastern coasts of the island. It is only on the eastern coasts that golf flourishes, for the western Highlanders are unacquainted with it, and the configuration of their country does not lend itself to a game in which level ground is necessary. Almost, if not the earliest mention of golf occurs in a royal edict of the year 1457, when Scotland was an independent nation, and nourished such bitter grudges against England, in the matter of William Wallace and other grievances, as to make war between the two countries a contingency to be always provided for by the Scottish kings. At that time the passion of the Anglo-Saxon, Scandinavian, and Lowland Scotch for the game was considered to be so excessive as to interfere with the practice of archery, which King James the Second desired to encourage. And well he might. Neither he nor any other Scotsman had ceased to boast of the glorious victory of Bannockburn, which the Scottish archers had won, against the best bowmen of England; and the times were perilous. England was not only a mighty neighbour to Scotland, but a troublesome one, as the fatal field of Flodden proved but too surely at a later period. James issued a royal edict, prohibiting both golf and football under heavy penalties. But he attempted a feat beyond his power to accomplish. And he was somewhat illogical and inconsequential besides, for there was nothing to prevent a good golfer from being a good archer. Anyhow, the Scottish people would not be legislated out of their amusement in days of peace, though quite ready to fight for their king and country in days of war. So they played golf as usual upon the breezy moorlands and links of their towns and cities, and the king found none to make a living law out of his dead edict. Forty-five years later, and thirteen years before Flodden—when the Scottish archers

had more than enough to do to hold their own against the superior hosts of England—James the Fourth revived the edict against golf. The Scotch are a “dour” and stubborn people, even in their sports. What they do they do with all their strength. Whether they fight, or make love, or drink, or make money, or amuse themselves, they do it “with a will.” It was their will to play golf, and they played it. As might have been foreseen by a wiser king than James, the fulminating edict became, for the second time, a dead letter. James the Fifth, the next king, was a hearty good fellow, loved to enjoy himself, as may be surmised from his ballad of *We’ll gang nae mair a Roving*, and his poems to Christ’s Kirk on the Green, and *Pebblis to the Play*. Besides, he was not involved with England. Under his merry rule, golf took fresh root in popular favour throughout the whole of Eastern and Middle Scotland. James the Sixth—who wrote the *Book of Sports* (afterwards ordered to be burned by the hands of the common hangman), and was anxious that labouring men, condemned to a life of toil during six days of the week, should, after going to church on the Sunday forenoon, take a bout at some athletic sport on the Sunday afternoon—was a friend of golf, football, and cricket, and established the Golf Club that still carries on the sport at Blackheath. His son, Charles the First, played golf on the links of Leith, and his grandson, the Duke of York, afterwards James the Second of England and Seventh of Scotland, wishing, in one of his visits to Edinburgh, to ingratiate himself with the Scottish people, thought no means more efficient than to play golf publicly among them. A dispute having arisen among some of the English nobles who accompanied him, whether golf were not the same game as the English hockey, the result was a challenge between two of the Englishmen to the Duke of York and any Scotsman he might select, to play a match upon the links of Leith. Tradition has failed to record the amount of the stake, but it appears to have been considerable. Golf is a democratic game, as all games of skill and strength must be, and, there being no great nobleman or gentleman of rank to be found on the Scottish side to contend against the southerners for the honour of Scotland, one John Patersone, a shoemaker, of Edinburgh, a noted golfer himself, and descended of a family in which proficiency in golf was hereditary, was prevailed upon, after some difficulty, to be the

duke’s partner. The duke and John Patersone won the match triumphantly. It was the duke’s first victory, and he was proud of it, but it was John Patersone’s ninth, and he was prouder still. With one half of the stakes the doughty shoemaker built himself a fine new house in the Canon-gate of Edinburgh, and placed over the door the anagrammatic motto, “I hate no persone,” derived from the transposition of the letters of his name. The duke, equally pleased, caused a tablet to be inserted in the wall, bearing the arms of the Patersone family, together with the motto of the golfers, “Far and Sure.”

“Far and sure” is not alone the motto, but the rule of golf. Strike the ball that it may fly *far*; strike it also so that it may fly *sure* towards the hole, which is its ultimate destination; such is the whole theory and practice of the sport. At St. Andrews people seem only to eat and drink that they may play golf. They sleep at night that they may rise refreshed for golf in the morning. They make money that they may have leisure to play golf in their holidays, and in the afternoons of their busy lives. No position is too high in life to prevent its occupant from playing golf, none is too low to debar him from the privilege. All ages, ranks, and classes, and both sexes, give way to the fascination of the game.

If it wasna lawful,
Lawyers wadna allow it.
If it was na holy,
Ministers wadna do it.
If it was na modest,
Maidens wadna tak it.
If it was na plenty,
Puir folk wadna get it!

Nothing stops golf in St. Andrews except snow and darkness, and these only because the one fills up the holes, and the other renders them invisible. Wind, rain, and sleet have no effect, unless the wind blows such a hurricane as to interfere with the course of the ball.

The Golf Club at St. Andrews, overlooking the links, consists of about six hundred members, of whom not above a third, if so many, are permanent residents of the city and neighbourhood. Society in Great Golfington is not an “upper ten thousand,” but a small and very select body of two or three hundred, including the professors of the university, the lawyers, the doctors, the bankers, and the country gentlemen of the district, with their wives and families. These, it is evident, do not afford a public sufficiently

numerous for a club of such magnitude. The members, however, if not residents, are annual visitors, and come from all parts of the world—from San Francisco, Chicago, and New York, on one side, and from Canton, Calcutta, Hong Kong, on the other, even from Sydney and Melbourne, to indulge in the game, and prevent the old city from becoming musty and stagnant. The laws of golf, as interpreted by the St. Andrew's Golfing Club, are the laws of the game all over the Scottish world.

Let me describe these famous links as well as I can, by the aid, not only of a personal survey, but of a large and elaborate map of the golfing ground, which is to be seen in most of the fashionable private houses of the city. The links extend along the margin of the sea shore, from the city towards the embouchure of the river Eden, where it falls into the Bay of St. Andrews. The ground is about four miles and a half in length, and half or three quarters of a mile in width. The course taken at a match is up one side of the links and down again on the other, making a distance of upwards of nine miles. On the course, out and in, there are nine holes, about a mile apart, respectively called the Bridge Hole, the Cartgate Hole, the Third Hole, the Ginger Beer Hole, the Hell Hole, the Heather Hole, the Eden Hole, the Short Hole, and the End Hole. One part of the link, that presents a smooth green sward, and offers no difficulties to the golfer, in the shape of "bunkers," that is, pits or deep hollows in the soil, or "whin bushes," in which the ball may get embedded and concealed, is called the Elysian Fields, and another, where these combined difficulties are many, and extend over the best part of a mile, is called Pandemonium by the ladies. The gentlemen are less mealy-mouthed, and give it the shorter, and more emphatic designation of "Hell." He who, in the words of the Golfiad, a poem by an anonymous writer, can send his ball

Smack over Hell at one immortal go,
is generally rewarded for his pith of arm and his success with a ringing cheer, alike from his partisans and opponents. A golfer and a poet—and poets of the third and fourth order are almost as common in Scotland as blackberries in England—says of the fifth, or Hell-hole :

What daring genius first yeclipt thee Hell;
What high poetic, awe-struck, grand old golfer,
Much more of a mythologist than scoff-er!
Whoe'er he was, the name befits thee well!
"All hope abandon, ye who enter here,"
Is written awful o'er thy gloomy jaws!

The clubs used at the game are of various degrees of strength, weight, and elasticity—some for hitting a hard blow on level ground, some more adapted for the hilly ground, strewn with pits and bunkers, some for extricating the ball from the whin and furze bushes, and some for the gentle final stroke that is to land the ball safely in the hole, from which at the final consummation it may not be a yard, or even an inch distant.

There is a minimum supply of clubs to be carried by the caddie, from which the player can select his weapon, according to his fancy or his requirements: the play club, the long spoon, the middle spoon, the short spoon, the click, the heavy iron, and the light iron. Some players, however, are fastidious, and load their caddies with twenty or thirty clubs, that they may have a plethora of choice, when the lay of the ball and the distance from the hole present any real or seeming difficulty to be surmounted. The side that lands its ball in the ninth hole, after the smallest number of strokes during the whole course, is the winner. It is no wonder to any one who has ever tried his hand at golf, especially on these breezy links, that the game should be a fascinating one. The beautiful stretch of open land, the blue expanse of sea, the joyous "caller air" that comes surging and waving over the deep, laden with health to the smoke-dried lungs of men who have long been pent in cities; the exhilaration of the steady march after the flying ball; all these auxiliaries make up a sport that has for its votaries to the full as much delight as fox-hunting or deer-stalking. And all the more delightful for being unalloyed, like these sports, with cruelty or wrong to the humblest living thing that God has created. As the Golfer's Garland, an old song of 1743, says:

At golf we contend without rancour or spleen,
And bloodless the laurels we reap on the green:
From healthful exertion our pleasures arise,
And to crown our delight no poor fugitive dies.

Blue devils, diseases, dull sorrow, and care,
Are chased by our balls as they fly through the air,
And small were the monsters that Hercules slew,
Compared with the fiends that our clubs can subdue!

Every one has heard of the passion of some folks for whist, of others for angling, and of others again for skating, a pastime that our climate but too seldom affords; but few out of Scotland know the intensity of the passion with which golf inspires its votaries, and which age and decrepitude

are powerless to subdue. When the golfer's legs fail him, and he can no longer tramp eight or ten miles after his ball, he betakes himself to his donkey or his pony, dismounts to strike the blow, and remounts in the pursuit, with as much zest as in his youth. Golfers of eighty years of age are by no means rarities on the Scottish links. And one sturdy veteran of eighty-three, still "to the fore," never fails to appear on the links upon Mondays, because he is of opinion that the Sunday's rest gives new vigour to his Monday arm. "I wadna' lose my Monday," he says, "for a' the days in the week."

The game of golf may be compared to the battle of life. All the qualities of mind and body requisite for success in the world, and for the enjoyment of a genial and respectable old age, are brought into requisition by it. You must strike hard, but not too hard, lest your ball fly beyond the point arrived at, plump into the river or the sea. You must have a quick eye for difficulties, a prompt hand to surmount them, a keen appreciation, when within sight of the goal or hole which it is your object to attain, of the slightest inequalities of ground which in the final and gentle push, may, if great care be not taken, deflect the ball in its course. You must sometimes urge your ball in a circle to win, rather than aim straight at the mark. You must go round about, like a politician and a strategist. When you are in a difficulty you must extricate yourself bravely, and with the least possible loss of chances. You must be bold, you must be strong, you must be patient, you must be alert, and take all nature into your companionship. You must know the defects of your friends, and you must not underrate their virtues, or over-estimate the virtues or the defects of your opponents. Above all, you must stand firm when you strike, and continue vigorously to the end, ever doing the best you can; and if you be not rewarded with the good fortune for which you have striven, you will be rewarded with the approval of your own conscience; and when the struggle is ended, be able to say, with a clear conscience, "I have done my best."

In short, golf is the most varied and exhilarating of all the games which are played with a ball: better than hand-ball, fives, foot-ball, tennis, racket, or cricket itself: the only one of the list that may claim to compete with it in healthfulness. It requires youth for cricket, but both youth and age can play at golf—and enjoy it!

And if this be not a feather in the cap of the royal game, it is of no further use to argue the question.

GREEN TEA.

A CASE REPORTED BY MARTIN HESSELIUS, THE
GERMAN PHYSICIAN.

IN TEN CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER VI. HOW MR. JENNINGS MET HIS COMPANION.

THE faint glow of the west, the pomp of the then lonely woods of Richmond, were before us, behind and about us the darkening room, and on the stony face of the sufferer—for the character of his face, though still gentle and secret, was changed—rested that dim, odd glow which seems to descend and produce, where it touches, lights, sudden though faint, which are lost, almost without gradation, in darkness. The silence, too, was utter; not a distant wheel, or bark, or whistle from without; and within the depressing stillness of an invalid bachelor's house.

I guessed well the nature, though not even vaguely the particulars, of the revelations I was about to receive, from that fixed face of suffering that, so oddly flushed, stood out, like a portrait of Schalken's, before its background of darkness.

"It began," he said, "on the 15th of October, three years and eleven weeks ago, and two days—I keep very accurate count, for every day is torment. If I leave anywhere a chasm in my narrative tell me.

"About four years ago I began a work, which had cost me very much thought and reading. It was upon the religious metaphysics of the ancients."

"I know," said I; "the actual religion of educated and thinking paganism, quite apart from symbolic worship? A wide and very interesting field."

"Yes; but not good for the mind—the Christian mind, I mean. Paganism is all bound together in essential unity, and, with evil sympathy, their religion involves their art, and both their manners, and the subject is a degrading fascination and the nemesis sure. God forgive me!

"I wrote a great deal; I wrote late at night. I was always thinking on the subject, walking about, wherever I was, everywhere. It thoroughly infected me. You are to remember that all the material ideas connected with it were more or less of the beautiful, the subject itself delightfully interesting, and I, then, without a care."

He sighed heavily.

"I believe that every one who sets about writing in earnest does his work, as a friend of mine phrased it, *on something*—tea, or coffee, or tobacco. I suppose there is a material waste that must be hourly supplied in such occupations, or that we should grow too abstracted, and the mind, as it were, pass out of the body, unless it were reminded often of the connexion by actual sensation. At all events, I felt the want, and I supplied it. Tea was my companion—at first the ordinary black tea, made in the usual way, not too strong; but I drank a great deal, and increased its strength as I went on. I never experienced an uncomfortable symptom from it. I began to take a little green tea. I found the effect pleasanter, it cleared and intensified the power of thought so. I had come to take it frequently, but not stronger than one might take it for pleasure. I wrote a great deal out here, it was so quiet, and in this room. I used to sit up very late, and it became a habit with me to sip my tea—green tea—every now and then as my work proceeded. I had a little kettle on my table, that swung over a lamp, and made tea two or three times between eleven o'clock and two or three in the morning, my hours of going to bed. I used to go into town every day. I was not a monk, and, although I often spent an hour or two in a library, hunting up authorities and looking out lights upon my theme, I was in no morbid state, so far as I can judge. I met my friends pretty much as usual, and enjoyed their society, and, on the whole, existence had never been, I think, so pleasant before.

"I had met with a man who had some odd old books, German editions in mediæval Latin, and I was only too happy to be permitted access to them. This obliging person's books were in the City, a very out-of-the-way part of it. I had rather out-stayed my intended hour, and, on coming out, seeing no cab near, I was tempted to get into the omnibus which used to drive past this house. It was darker than this by the time the 'bus had reached an old house, you may have remarked, with four poplars at each side of the door, and there the last passenger but myself got out. We drove along rather faster. It was twilight now. I leaned back in my corner next the door ruminating pleasantly.

"The interior of the omnibus was nearly dark. I had observed in the corner opposite to me at the other side, and at the end next the horses, two small circular reflections, as

it seemed to me, of a reddish light. They were about two inches apart, and about the size of those small brass buttons that yachting men used to put upon their jackets. I began to speculate, as listless men will, upon this trifle, as it seemed. From what centre did that faint but deep red light come, and from what—glass beads, buttons, toy decorations—was it reflected? We were lumbering along gently, having nearly a mile still to go. I had not solved the puzzle, and it became in another minute more odd, for these two luminous points, with a sudden jerk, descended nearer the floor, keeping still their relative distance and horizontal position, and then, as suddenly, they rose to the level of the seat on which I was sitting, and I saw them no more.

"My curiosity was now really excited, and, before I had time to think, I saw again these two dull lamps, again together near the floor; again they disappeared, and again in their old corner I saw them.

"So, keeping my eyes upon them, I edged quietly up my own side, towards the end at which I still saw these tiny discs of red.

"There was very little light in the 'bus. It was nearly dark. I leaned forward to aid my endeavour to discover what these little circles really were. They shifted their position a little as I did so. I began now to perceive an outline of something black, and I soon saw with tolerable distinctness the outline of a small black monkey, pushing its face forward in mimicry to meet mine; those were its eyes, and I now dimly saw its teeth grinning at me.

"I drew back, not knowing whether it might not meditate a spring. I fancied that one of the passengers had forgot this ugly pet, and wishing to ascertain something of its temper, though not caring to trust my fingers to it, I poked my umbrella softly towards it. It remained immovable—up to it—*through* it! For through it, and back and forward, it passed, without the slightest resistance.

"I can't, in the least, convey to you the kind of horror that I felt. When I had ascertained that the thing was an illusion, as I then supposed, there came a misgiving about myself and a terror that fascinated me in impotence to remove my gaze from the eyes of the brute for some moments. As I looked, it made a little skip back, quite into the corner, and I, in a panic, found myself at the door, having put my head out, drawing deep breaths of the outer air, and staring at the lights and trees we were

passing, too glad to reassure myself of reality.

"I stopped the 'bus, and got out. I perceived the man look oddly at me as I paid him. I dare say there was something unusual in my looks and manner, for I had never felt so strangely before."

CHAPTER VII. THE JOURNEY: FIRST STAGE.

"WHEN the omnibus drove on, and I was alone upon the road, I looked carefully round to ascertain whether the monkey had followed me. To my indescribable relief I saw it nowhere. I can't describe easily what a shock I had received, and my sense of genuine gratitude on finding myself, as I supposed, quite rid of it.

"I had got out a little before we reached this house, two or three hundred steps away. A brick wall runs along the foot-path, and inside the wall is a hedge of yew or some dark evergreen of that kind, and within that again the row of fine trees which you may have remarked as you came.

"This brick wall is about as high as my shoulder, and happening to raise my eyes I saw the monkey, with that stooping gait, on all fours, walking or creeping, close beside me on top of the wall. I stopped looking at it with a feeling of loathing and horror. As I stopped so did it. It sat up on the wall with its long hands on its knees looking at me. There was not light enough to see it much more than in outline, nor was it dark enough to bring the peculiar light of its eyes into strong relief. I still saw, however, that red foggy light plainly enough. It did not show its teeth, nor exhibit any sign of irritation, but seemed jaded and sulky, and was observing me steadily.

"I drew back into the middle of the road. It was an unconscious recoil, and there I stood, still looking at it. It did not move.

"With an instinctive determination to try something—anything, I turned about and walked briskly towards town with a saunce look, all the time watching the movements of the beast. It crept swiftly along the wall, at exactly my pace.

"Where the wall ends, near the turn of the road, it came down and with a wiry spring or two brought itself close to my feet, and continued to keep up to me, as I quickened my pace. It was at my left side, so close to my leg that I felt every moment as if I should tread upon it.

"The road was quite deserted and silent, and it was darker every moment. I stopped

dismayed and bewildered, turning as I did so, the other way—I mean, towards this house, away from which I had been walking. When I stood still, the monkey drew back to a distance of, I suppose, about five or six yards, and remained stationary, watching me.

"I had been more agitated than I have said. I had read, of course, as every one has, something about 'spectral illusions,' as you physicians term the phenomena of such cases. I considered my situation and looked my misfortune in the face.

"These affections, I had read, are sometimes transitory and sometimes obstinate. I had read of cases in which the appearance, at first harmless, had, step by step, degenerated into something direful and insupportable, and ended by wearing its victim out. Still as I stood there, but for my bestial companion, quite alone, I tried to comfort myself by repeating again and again the assurance, 'the thing is purely disease, a well-known physical affection, as distinctly as small-pox or neuralgia. Doctors are all agreed on that, philosophy demonstrates it. I must not be a fool. I've been sitting up too late, and I dare say my digestion is quite wrong, and with God's help, I shall be all right, and this is but a symptom of nervous dyspepsia.' Did I believe all this? Not one word of it, no more than any other miserable being ever did who is once seized and riveted in this satanic captivity. Against my convictions, I might say my knowledge, I was simply bullying myself into a false courage.

"I now walked homeward. I had only a few hundred yards to go. I had forced myself into a sort of resignation, but I had not got over the sickening shock and the flurry of the first certainty of my misfortune.

"I made up my mind to pass the night at home. The brute moved close beside me, and I fancied there was the sort of anxious drawing toward the house, which one sees in tired horses or dogs, sometimes as they come toward home.

"I was afraid to go into town—I was afraid of any one's seeing and recognising me. I was conscious of an irrepressible agitation in my manner. Also, I was afraid of any violent change in my habits, such as going to a place of amusement, or walking from home in order to fatigue myself. At the hall-door it waited till I mounted the steps, and when the door was opened entered with me.

"I drank no tea that night. I got

cigars and some brandy-and-water. My idea was that I should act upon my material system, and by living for a while in sensation apart from thought, send myself forcibly, as it were, into a new groove. I came up here to this drawing-room. I sat just here. The monkey got upon a small table that then stood *there*. It looked dazed and languid. An irrepressible uncasiness as to its movements kept my eyes always upon it. Its eyes were half-closed, but I could see them glow. It was looking steadily at me. In all situations, at all hours, it is awake and looking at me. That never changes.

"I shall not continue in detail my narrative of this particular night. I shall describe, rather, the phenomena of the first year, which never varied, collectively. I shall describe the monkey as it appeared in daylight. In the dark, as you shall presently hear, there are peculiarities. It is a small monkey, perfectly black. It had only one peculiarity—a character of malignity—unfathomable malignity. During the first year it looked sullen and sick. But this character of intense malice and vigilance was always underlying that surly languor. During all that time it acted as if on a plan of giving me as little trouble as was consistent with watching me. Its eyes were never off me. I have never lost sight of it, except in my sleep, light or dark, day or night, since it came here, excepting when it withdraws for some weeks at a time, unaccountably.

"In total dark it is visible as in daylight. I do not mean merely its eyes. It is *all* visible distinctly in a halo that resembles a glow of red embers, and which accompanies it in all its movements.

"When it leaves me for a time, it is always at night, in the dark, and in the same way. It grows at first uneasy, and then furious, and then advances towards me, grinning and shaking its paws clenched, and, at the same time, there comes the appearance of fire in the grate. I never have any fire. I can't sleep in the room where there is any, and it draws nearer and nearer to the chimney, quivering, it seems, with rage, and when its fury rises to the highest pitch, it springs into the grate, and up the chimney, and I see it no more.

"When first this happened I thought I was released. I was a new man. A day passed—a night—and no return, and a blessed week—a week—another week. I was always on my knees, Dr. Hesselius, always, thanking God and praying. A

whole month passed of liberty, but on a sudden, it was with me again."

CHAPTER VIII. THE SECOND STAGE.

"It was with me, and the malice which before was torpid under a sullen exterior, was now active. It was perfectly unchanged in every other respect. This new energy was apparent in its activity and its looks, and soon in other ways.

"For a time, you will understand, the change was shown only in an increased vivacity, and an air of menace, as if it was always brooding over some atrocious plan. Its eyes, as before, were never off me."

"Is it here now?" I asked.

"No," he replied, "it has been absent exactly a fortnight and a day—fifteen days. It has sometimes been away so long as nearly two months, once for three. Its absence always exceeds a fortnight, although it may be but by a single day. Fifteen days having past since I saw it last, it may return now at any moment."

"Is its return," I asked, "accompanied by any peculiar manifestation?"

"Nothing—no," he said. "It is simply with me again. On lifting my eyes from a book, or turning my head, I see it, as usual, looking at me, and then it remains, as before, for its appointed time. I have never told so much and so minutely before to any one."

I perceived that he was agitated, and looking like death, and he repeatedly applied his handkerchief to his forehead, and I suggested that he might be tired, and told him that I would call, with pleasure, in the morning, but he said:

"No, if you don't mind hearing it all now. I have got so far, and I should prefer making one effort of it. When I spoke to Dr. Harley, I had nothing like so much to tell. You are a philosophic physician. You give spirit its proper rank. If this thing is real——"

He paused, looking at me with agitated inquiry.

"We can discuss it by-and-by, and very fully. I will give you all I think," I answered, after an interval.

"Well—very well. If it is anything real, I say, it is prevailing, little by little, and drawing me more interiorly into hell. Optic nerves, he talked of. Ah! well—there are other nerves of communication. May God Almighty help me! You shall hear.

"Its power of action, I tell you, had

increased. Its malice became, in a way, aggressive. About two years ago, some questions that were pending between me and the bishop, having been settled, I went down to my parish in Warwickshire, anxious to find occupation in my profession. I was not prepared for what happened, although I have since thought I might have apprehended something like it. The reason of my saying so, is this—

He was beginning to speak with a great deal more effort and reluctance, and sighed often, and seemed at times nearly overcome. But at this time his manner was not agitated. It was more like that of a sinking patient, who has given himself up.

"Yes, but I will first tell you about Kenlis, my parish.

"It was with me when I left this for Dawlbridge. It was my silent travelling companion, and it remained with me at the vicarge. When I entered on the discharge of my duties, another change took place. The thing exhibited an atrocious determination to thwart me. It was with me in the church—in the reading-desk—in the pulpit—within the communion-rails. At last, it reached this extremity, that while I was reading to the congregation, it would spring upon the open book and squat there, so that I was unable to see the page. This happened more than once.

"I left Dawlbridge for a time. I placed myself in Dr. Harley's hands. I did everything he told me. He gave me a great deal of thought. It interested him, I think. He seemed successful. For nearly three months I was perfectly free from a return. I began to think I was safe. With his full assent I returned to Dawlbridge.

"I travelled in a chaise. I was in good spirits. I was more—I was happy and grateful. I was returning, as I thought, delivered from a dreadful hallucination, to the scene of duties which I longed to enter upon. It was a beautiful sunny evening, everything looked serene and cheerful, and I was delighted. I remember looking out of the window to see the spire of my church at Kenlis among the trees, at the point where one has the earliest view of it. It is exactly where the little stream that bounds the parish, passes under the road by a culvert, and where it emerges at the road-side, a stone with an old inscription is placed. As we passed this point, I drew my head in and sat down, and in the corner of the chaise was the monkey.

"For a moment I felt faint, and then quite wild with despair and horror. I called to the driver, and got out, and sat down at the road-side, and prayed to God silently for mercy. A despairing resignation supervened. My companion was with me as I re-entered the vicarge. The same persecution followed. After a short struggle I submitted, and soon I left the place.

"I told you," he said "that the beast has before this become in certain ways aggressive. I will explain a little. It seemed to be actuated by intense and increasing fury, whenever I said my prayers, or even meditated prayer. It amounted at last to a dreadful interruption. You will ask, how could a silent immaterial phantom effect that? It was thus, whenever I meditated praying; it was always before me, and nearer and nearer.

"It used to spring on a table, on the back of a chair, on the chimney-piece, and slowly to swing itself from side to side, looking at me all the time. There is in its motion an indefinable power to dissipate thought, and to contract one's attention to that monotony, till the ideas shrink, as it were, to a point, and at last to nothing—and unless I had started up, and shook off the catalepsy I have felt as if my mind were on the point of losing itself. 'There are other ways,' he sighed heavily; 'thus, for instance, while I pray with my eyes closed, it comes closer and closer, and I see it. I know it is not to be accounted for physically, but I do actually see it, though my lids are closed, and so it rocks my mind, as it were, and overpowers me, and I am obliged to rise from my knees. If you had ever yourself known this, you would be acquainted with desperation.'

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VERONICA.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE."
IN FIVE BOOKS.

BOOK III.

CHAPTER III. A COUSIN.

THE carriage bearing Veronica rolled along smoothly down a long avenue. It was the road leading from an erst grand-ducal villa which stands on the top of an eminence—scarcely high enough to be termed a hill, in a country of Alps and Appenines, but which is of very respectable altitude nevertheless, and is called the Poggio Imperiale. The avenue is flanked by cypress and ilex-trees, of ancient growth.

Veronica had heard her mother speak so much, and so often, of Florence that she thought she knew it. But coming to view city and suburb with her bodily eyes, she found everything strange, foreign, and, on the score of beauty, disappointing. Later, she understood the amazing picturesqueness of that storied town, and, with every glance its attractions grew on her. But there are some places—as there is some music, and that among the noblest—which do not take at once the senses by storm, but need time and familiarity to develop their wealth of beauty and resource.

What Veronica saw with her unaccustomed eyes, was, first, the long, dusty, squalid Roman road, into which the carriage turned at the foot of the avenue: then the Porta Romana, with its huge, yawning archway, through which carts of all kinds were struggling; those coming in having to stop to be examined by the officers of the town custom dues, and those going out pushing boldly through the gate and grazing wheels against the stationary vehicles.

Everybody was talking very loudly. The

few who really could by no exercise of ingenuity find any more articulate words to say, solaced themselves by half-uttered oaths and long-drawn lugubrious howls addressed to the patient, lean beasts that drew the carts.

In odd contrast with this nimble energy of tongue, were the slow and languid movements of all concerned. The octroi men lounged against the walls on high four-legged stools set out before a queer little office, very dim and dirty, with glazed windows. They had within reach long iron rods, with which they probed trusses of hay or straw, or which they thrust in among bundles of linen, or piles of straw-coloured flasks, or poked down amidst the legs of people sitting in country chaises, or under the box-seat of hackney coachmen. And when they had thus satisfied themselves that there was no attempt being made to defraud the municipality of Florence of the tax on food and wine, and whatsoever other articles are subject to duty, they—always with ineffable languor—put their hands into their pockets again and bade the driver proceed. One man especially, with melancholy dark eyes and a sallow face, uttered the permission to pass on, "Avanti!" in a tone of such profound and hopeless dejection, that one might have fancied him a guardian of that awful portal his great townsman wrote of, rather than a mortal custom-house officer at the city gate, and that he was warning the doomed victims: "Abandon hope, all ye who enter here!"

Sir John Gale's carriage only paused for an instant in passing through the Porta Romana. The spirited horses chafed at the momentary check, and dashed on again rapidly over the resounding pavement.

A succession of objects seemed to flit

past Veronica's eyes like the swift changes in a dream.

There was a long street paved with flat stones, fitted into each other angle for angle and point for point, like the pieces in a child's puzzle. There was in this street no side pavement for foot passengers, and—the street being very full—the coachman kept uttering a warning cry at intervals, like a minute-gun. Indeed, as they approached the busier parts of the town, their pace was slackened perforce. No vehicle short of the car of Juggernaut could have ruthlessly kept up a steady progress through such a crowd.

There were houses of various styles and dimensions on either side of the long street, nearly all plastered; one or two, however, with a heavy cut stone front to the basement story. Every window had the inevitable green jalousies, and nearly every window had a group of heads framed in it, for it was a summer evening, and there were people taking the air—they called it *pigliare il fresco*, albeit it was yet hot enough, and stifling in the narrow ways of the city; and there were bright bonnets to be criticised, and acquaintances to be recognised, and familiar conversations touching the privatest family affairs to be held in brassy voices, between ladies and gentlemen standing in the street, and other ladies and gentlemen leaning on their elbows out of third-floor windows. And the talkers in the street planted themselves in any spot that came convenient, and remained there immovable, as regardless of the pressing throng of passers-by, as a stubborn broad-based stone in a stream is regardless of the rushing current. And the passers-by yielded as the water yields, and skirted round these obstructive groups, or—if the subject of their discourse struck them as peculiarly interesting—lingered awhile to listen to their talk with a grave placidity, which might be characterised as good-humoured, only that that word suggests somewhat of merriment to an English ear, and these people wore few smiles on their brown faces.

Then came a vision of an open space with houses on the left hand, and on the right a steep incline covered with gravel, on the summit of which stood a vast palace (its facade seeming at the first glance somewhat low for its width), flanked by open arcades that advanced from the main body of the building and embraced two sides of the gravelled space. These arcades were based on titanic blocks of rough stone,

and under the shade of the arches a military band was making lively music, and a dense mass of citizens with their wives and families was listening to it, still with the same non-chalant placidity.

Onward through a very narrow street of gloomy, frowning, iron-barred stone palaces; across a quaint bridge with shops and houses on it, where the gems and gold in the jewellers' windows flashed brightly beneath the beetle-browed penthouse shutters; past an open arch making a gap in the line of buildings on the bridge, through which was seen a glimpse of gold and purple hills swimming in a haze of evening sunshine; along a stone quay with tall handsome houses on one hand, and on the other a deep wide trench more than half full of brownish sand, and with pools of water here and there, and a shrank middle stream sluggishly crawling towards the sea, which stream was the classic Arno, nothing less!—past the end of another bridge wide and handsome, at whose foot a dense crowd was assembled in a small piazzetta: some standing, some sitting on stone benches, some perched on the parapet overhanging the river, all watching the passers-by on foot or in vehicles; down another street which widened out into a considerable space, and then contracted again, and where a tall column stood, and hackney coaches were ranged hard by, and a vast old mediæval palace—more like a fortress than a palace—heaved its bulk above the narrow ways behind and about it, like a giant raising his head and shoulders out of a pressing throng to breathe; and where a few elegantly dressed gentlemen (rather attenuated about the legs, and unwholesome about the skin, and with a general vague air pervading them—though some were handsome dark-eyed youngsters, too—of having not quite enough to eat, and considerably too much to smoke) were lounging at the door of a club-house, utterly unlike any club-house known to dwellers beyond the Straits of Dover, or perhaps nearer than that: and at last the carriage drew up suddenly with a mighty clatter at the door of a smart shop, all French mirrors and gilding, where fans were displayed for sale, and Paul descended nimbly but decorously from the box to hand “*miladi*” out.

All the sights that she had seen in her rapid drive, were vividly impressed on Veronica's eyes, but she had not had time to give herself an account of them: to digest them, as it were, in her brain. She felt al-

most giddy as she alighted, and entered the shop. But one circumstance had not escaped either her observation or her comprehension: the fact, namely, that her beauty and elegance had attracted much attention from the loungers at the club door. One man especially had gazed at her, like one enchanted, as her carriage whirled past.

She was looking at a bright glittering heap of fans on the counter, turning them over with a disdainful air, and pushing them away one by one with the tips of her gloves, when she became aware of a face looking furtively in through the spacious pane of the shop window. The face disappeared, and its owner walked away. Presently he repassed, glanced in again (when he did so, Veronica's quick eye recognised him as the man who had stared at her so admiringly in the street), and finally stopped and addressed Paul, who was standing in sentinel fashion at the shop door.

To Veronica's surprise, Paul answered him at once, touching his hat respectfully. She hastily chose a couple of fans, bade her maid pay for them and bring them to the carriage, and went to the door, where Paul was still so busily conversing with the stranger that he was not aware of her approach until she spoke to him.

At the sound of her voice he turned hastily and the stranger took off his hat and bowed profoundly.

He was a well-looking, slender man, of about thirty. He had fine teeth, and bright dark eyes, which latter, however, seemed to elude yours like a picture badly hung, on which you cannot get a good light, shift and strive as you will. It was not that he turned his glance aside either, for he seemed to look boldly enough at whoever addressed him, but the glittering eye could not be fathomed. He was prematurely bald about the forehead, but the back and sides of his head were sufficiently well covered with dark waving locks, and he wore a short beard and moustaches of glossy black. His dress was of the latest fashion, and, although perhaps slightly brighter in colour than an insular eye would deem fitting for masculine attire, was well chosen and perfectly made. He wore a glass in his eye, attached to a short black ribbon. And when he bowed, the glass fell and dangled across his waistcoat.

"A thousand pardons, madame," he said, speaking in French but with a strong Italian accent: "I formerly had the honour of knowing Monsieur le Baron Gale, and just recognised his servant."

Veronica bowed, with an easy hauteur, which yet was not calculated to repulse the speaker. So at least he thought, for he ventured to press forward and offer the support of his arm to assist Veronica into her carriage. She touched it with the tips of her fingers as she got in. Paul stood holding the door open with a grave face.

"I was charmed to find that my good friend Gale had returned to Italy," said the gentleman, still standing barcheaded by the side of the carriage after Veronica was seated. "And," he added, "under such delightful circumstances. Paul tells me that he is in the Villa Chiari. I shall do myself the honour—if I may hope for your amiable permission—of paying my respects to my good Gale, my homage to madame."

Veronica bowed, smiled very slightly, murmured some inarticulate word, and gave the signal to drive on, leaving the stranger, hat in hand, on the pavement. When she had driven some distance, she asked Paul in English who that person was?

He was the Signor Cesare Barletti, dei Principi Barletti; not the head of the house; a younger brother. The Barletti were a Neapolitan family. The Prince Cesare had known Sir John at Naples; Oh yes; that was quite true. And Sir John had liked him to come and play picquet or écarté with him when he was laid up at his hotel, and could not go out. He (Paul) certainly thought that Sir John would like the prince to call and see him; otherwise Paul would have taken good care not to mention Sir John's present address. The Principe Cesare de' Barletti, was not a Florentine; miladi understood—did she not?—that it was the renewal of old Florentine "relations" which Sir John objected to at present.

"Miladi" leaned back with an assumption of indifference and inattention while Paul spoke. But no syllable of what he said was lost upon her.

Barletti! Cesare de' Barletti! This man, then, was a cousin of her own! Her mother's father had been dei Principi, of the Princes Barletti.

Sir John knew and cared nothing about Veronica's mother. He in all probability had never heard Mrs. Levincourt's maiden name. But Veronica knew it well, and had nourished a secret pride in her Neapolitan ancestry.

That the man who had accosted her was her cousin, did not much matter. But his intention of paying a visit to Villa Chiari mattered a great deal. It offered

a hope of change and society. She had been a little surprised that Paul should have given him the address. But Paul had himself explained that. It was old Florentine acquaintances whom Sir John wished to shun. This man being a stranger in Tuscany might have the entrée to Villa Chiari. Doubtless Paul knew what he was about. If Sir John knew that Barletti was Veronica's cousin would it make any difference in his reception of him? She mused upon the question until she reached the villa. It was quite evening. The sun had set behind the hills; but there was still a brightness in the sky. "Miladi" hastened to her own room to dress for dinner. She made a gorgeous toilet every day; finding a great deal of real pleasure in her fine clothes. The suspicion that this was a pleasure which some other person in her presence genuinely disdained, would have much embittered her delight in the rich silks and gay jewels and fine lace. But such a mortification never befel her in Sir John Gale's company.

At dinner they talked of Cesare de' Barletti.

"Paul has told you, of course," said Veronica, "about the man who spoke to him, and afterwards to me?"

"Oh yes—Barletti. Ah—yes: I knew him at Naples. Wonder what brings him here!"

"He said he would call."

"Not a doubt of it! He likes a good dinner and good wine; and he never gets either at his own expense."

"I should suppose that the Principe de' Barletti does not need to come to his acquaintances for food!" said Veronica.

Sir John burst into a grating laugh. "Bah!" he cried, "you are impayable with your Principe de' Barletti! The real prince and head of the family is poor enough. He lives nine months of every year in the third floor of a mangy palazzo at Torre del Greco, in order to scrape together enough to spend the other three months in Paris. But this fellow is only *dei principi*—a younger son of a younger son. He has twopence a year, which he spends on shiny boots (I dare say he blacks them himself) and cheap gloves. But he plays a good game of picquet; and I found it worth while to let him come nearly every evening when I was once laid by the heels—or the toe, rather, for I got a confounded fit of the gout—in a beastly hotel at Naples. Of course he was very glad. It paid him capitally!"

Veronica's temper was chafed by this slighting mention of a Barletti. It vexed her. She knew that Sir John's coarse insolence was directed against this man in utter ignorance of the fact that he was in any degree connected with herself. Still it vexed her. But she had no intention of incurring the risk of ridicule for the sake of championing her newly-found relation. She had been considerably elated by the thought of being cousin to a prince: and proportionally depressed by the discovery that to be *dei Principi* Barletti was no guarantee of important position.

"Then you mean this man to come here?" asked Veronica.

"Mean him to come? Yes; if he makes himself amusing. If not, I shall give him his congé."

"If you feel that you want amusement why do you not go into Florence sometimes?"

"La bella idea! Go to Florence for amusement in June! There's nobody there; and if there were, it's much too hot to do anything. Besides—no, no; we must get through the summer here as best we can. The dry heat suits me rather: especially on this hill where one gets plenty of air, even if it be hot air. In the autumn and winter we will move south. Meanwhile if Barletti drops in our way, so be it."

"Nobody in Florence?" replied Veronica, whose mind had been dwelling on those words. "It seemed to me that there were a great many carriages—"

"You did not go to the Cascine?" interrupted Sir John, quickly.

"No: I was too late. But I saw the people driving along the Lung' Arno."

She perfectly understood from Sir John's manner that he had given orders to Paul not to take her to the Cascine, and that he had felt a momentary suspicion that his orders had been disobeyed. The question presented itself to her mind, what would have been the result if Paul had yielded to her desire? But when she retired to her own apartment—which she did early—she lay awake for some time, occupying herself exclusively with another and very different problem: namely, which of her dresses she should put on to-morrow evening when Cesare de' Barletti might be expected to make his appearance at Villa Chiari.

CHAPTER IV. IN THE GARDEN.

"I WAS so delightfully astonished!"

"At seeing Paul? He does not usually produce ecstasy in the beholder. But

'tutti i gusti son gusti,' all tastes are tastes, as they say here."

"Pardon! no: not at the sight of Paul for Paul's sake, but——"

"But for mine?"

"For yours, caro mio. I had never heard that you were married; never."

"I wonder if he had," thought Sir John. "He says it so emphatically, that it is probably a lie."

"And the sight of miladi positively dazzled me! What eyes! What a grace! How beautiful!"

"Take another cup of coffee," said Sir John, dryly, interrupting the raptures of his companion. And yet the raptures did not altogether displease him.

Sir John Gale and the Principe Cesare de' Barletti were sitting together beneath the loggia on the western side of the Villa Chiari. The setting sun was flushing all the sky before them. They looked out on the garden, where, among the laurels and acacias, a white figure passed and repassed slowly.

The cracked scagliola pavement of the loggia was covered, where the two men sat, by a thick carpet. Footstools and cushions were there too, in abundance. Between Sir John and his guest stood a little marble-topped table, bearing coffee and wine. Sir John was half reclining in an easy chair, with his legs stretched out before him supported by cushions. Barletti sat in a rocking-chair, on which he swung slowly backwards and forwards. Both men were smoking.

"The coffee is not bad, eh?" said Sir John.

"It is very strong."

"Better than the stuff they give you at your caffè, isn't it?"

"Ma, si! Better no doubt. But very strong. I should like a little cold water, if I may have it."

Sir John rang a bell that stood on the table.

Before a servant could answer the summons, Veronica approached. She had been strolling up and down the garden, and had just reached the spot in front of the loggia, when the bell sounded.

"What do you want?" she asked.

"The Principe would like some cold water. He finds the coffee stronger than he is accustomed to."

There was an indefinable sneer in the tone in which Sir John pronounced these words. The words were innocent enough. But Veronica understood the tone, and it offended her.

"I dare say he does," she retorted. "It is made to suit our English taste, which likes strong flavours—some people would say, coarse flavours."

"Oh no!" protested Barletti, not having in the least understood either the sneer or the retort; "the flavour is very good indeed."

"There is some deliciously cold water always in the marble basin of the broken fountain yonder," said Veronica, impulsively. "Let us go and get some! It will be better than any the servants will bring."

The words were addressed to Cesare de' Barletti, who threw away his cigarette—with secret reluctance, by the way—and rose to follow 'miladi.'

She had taken up a goblet from the table and was running towards the fountain.

She had resolved to impress this stranger—already appreciative enough of her beauty—with her dignity, hauteur, and airs de grande dame. And on a sudden behold her skipping through the garden like a school-girl!

The first plan was too slow, and required too much phlegm and patience to carry out. Barletti took her queenly mood very much as a matter of course. She could not bear to be ten minutes in the society of a stranger without producing an *effect*. And moreover she required to see an immediate result. She was vain and arrogant, but not proud, and not stupid; so that she could neither disregard the opinion of the most contemptible persons, nor delude herself in the teeth of evidence with the dull, comfortable faith that she was being admired, when she was not. And then came the irresistible craving to make a coup—to shine—to dazzle.

Sir John looked after her in surprised vexation. He remembered her having done similar things for *his* behoof; that had been very natural and laudable. But for a beggarly Neapolitan principino! Sir John felt himself defrauded. Had a pet animal approached him at the moment, he would certainly have kicked it. As it was, all he could do to relieve his feelings was to swear at the frightened servant who answered the bell, for not coming sooner.

Cesare de' Barletti wondered much within himself that any human being should move more, or more quickly, than was absolutely necessary, on a hot June evening. He at first attributed Veronica's unexpected proceeding to that inexhaus-

tible and incomprehensible cause, British eccentricity.

But when he rejoined her at the edge of the broken fountain, another solution presented itself to his mind. She had perhaps seized this opportunity of speaking to him out of sight and hearing of her husband. Why not? It was impossible that she could care a straw for that elderly *roué*. Very natural to have married him; he was so rich. Very natural also to admire the Principe Cesare de' Barletti, who was not eligible as a husband—as he very well knew, and very candidly acknowledged—but who was decidedly well-looking and well-born, and would make a very jewel of cavalieri *serventi*! There was but one circumstance which caused Cesare to hesitate before accepting this solution as final. Veronica was an Englishwoman! And really there was no judging Englishwomen by the rules that hold good in estimating the motives of the rest of the sex! And who-soever should suppose that this reflection implied in the Italian's mind any special respect or admiration for Englishwomen, would have been very much mistaken.

Veronica filled the goblet at the fountain. The filling was a slow process, inasmuch as the water dripped sparsely through the crevice before mentioned. Whilst the drops of bright water were falling one by one into the glass, Veronica kept her eyes fixed on the latter, and her attention was apparently absorbed in watching it.

"I pray you not to give yourself the trouble to do that for me, signora," said Barletti, bending forward, and offering to take the goblet.

She waved him back with her hand, and said, "I am watching to see how long it takes to fill the glass. The drops fall so regularly. Drip, drip, drip!"

He stood and looked at her. Now, at all events, he was not taking her behaviour as a matter of course.

As soon as the water touched the brim of the glass, she relinquished it into Barletti's hands and walked away slowly, as though she had lost all interest in his further proceedings. The prince drank a long draught. He had no idea of not enjoying its delicious coolness because he was puzzled by "*miladi*." When he had done, he walked after her, and overtook her.

"That was very fresh and pleasant," he said. "A thousand thanks."

"Eh?"

"The water was so good. A thousand—"

"Oh!"

"Decidedly," thought Barletti, glancing at the beautiful face beside him, "she is English, thoroughly English! Who is to make out such people?"

They found, on returning to the house, that Sir John had gone in. He was in the little salon, the servants said. Would it Signor Principe join him there?

Il Signor Principe complied with the request.

Veronica lingered in the loggia and looked out over the landscape. The sun had gone down. The brief twilight was nearly over. The trees stood out dark against the background of pure sky, pale green near the horizon, and deepening towards the zenith to an intense dark blue. Not a leaf stirred in the breathless calm. There was no moon, but the heavens seemed to grow full of stars as the daylight faded. They quivered and shook with a liquid silvery lustre. And below on the earth sparkled and danced to and fro a thousand golden gleaming specks, threading a mazy pattern just above the crests of the ripening wheat. They were fire-flies. When one of the bright insects chanced to come near Veronica, she saw him glow and pale with a palpitating intermittent flame. And sometimes the whole field full of them appeared to shine and fade simultaneously, like the successive showers of sparks from a smithy fire that respond to the deep breath of the labouring bellows.

It was all as different as possible from Daneshire. And yet Veronica began to think of a certain summer night in Shipley long ago, when she and Maud were children together, and her mother had sat by an open window telling them stories of her Italian life. She remembered the black old yew-tree, only a little blacker than the cloudy, sultry, starless sky. She remembered the sound of her mother's voice, and Maud's dimly-seen little white face, and the touch of Maud's soft, warm, little hand, stroking her (Veronica's) hair in a sort of rhythmic accompaniment to Mrs. Levincourt's narrative. She did not think she had been very happy in those days. She pitied herself as she recalled some of them. Nevertheless their remembrance caused a vague yearning in her heart, and filled her eyes with tears. A conviction, which she tried to ignore, was in her mind. She did not fight against it by self-deluding arguments; she simply tried to avoid acknowledging its existence, as we turn away our eyes from a disagreeable object that we know to be lying in wait for us on a path whereby

we must pass. But it was there; she knew it was there. And this conviction was, that she had given all and gained nothing—that she had been duped and defrauded.

She did not believe that what she aimed at would, if obtained, have turned to dust and ashes. And she knew she had not got what she aimed at. The horrible sense of the *irrevocableness* of the past came over her. The tears brimmed over and ran down her cheeks, and they brought no solace. They only humiliated, and made her angry.

A maid, going into one of the upper rooms to close the shutters for the night, looked out and saw "miladi," leaning, with folded arms, against a column at the end of the loggia, and apparently absorbed in watching the fire-flies.

It was an odd idea to stand there alone, when she might chat, and lounge on a sofa, and drink iced lemonade in the salon! But gentlefolks were odd: especially foreign gentlefolks. And Beppina went down to the servants' quarters, not ill contented with her own lot, and prepared to discuss her master and mistress, and to thank her stars—with a side glance at Ansano, the footman—that *she* was not tied to that "vecchio brontolone," that grumbling old fellow, as she irreverently styled Sir John Gale.

Meanwhile Veronica, who never yielded herself, long, to any painful mental impression, returned to the house, and entered the saloon where Sir John and the prince were engaged over their game at piquet.

The room was brilliantly lighted, and dazzled her, coming from without. She felt more angry with her tears than ever, on becoming suddenly aware, as she entered the saloon, that her eyelids were swollen, and her eyes weak, and that they must be red and ugly.

"Oh," she cried, stopping short, and clasping her hands before her face, "What a glare! It blinds me!"

Sir John was too intent on his game to regard her. Cesare de' Barletti looked up, and fell instantly into a trance of admiration—for a costly diamond that glittered on Veronica's slender finger. He played a wrong card (as he afterwards confessed, an *imbecile* card!) and was vanquished.

Sir John was pleased. So was Veronica. The former attributed the victory to his own skill, on which—as he played very ill—he valued himself. The latter had no doubt that her presence had agitated de' Barletti into forgetting his game. Barletti himself was well satisfied to have put

his host into good humour. The stakes, for which they played, were very trifling, and he thought the small sum he had lost not ill invested.

"Will you have your revenge, prince?" asked Sir John, throwing himself back in his chair with a complacent smile.

Barletti shook his head doubtfully.

"Aha! You show the white feather? Positively I did not think I should be able to tell one card from another. It is so long since I have played. You ought to have beaten me, you really ought. Ha, ha, ha!"

Veronica seated herself on a couch near the window. Her white dress was soft and flowing, and her black hair shone in its rich ripples as she leaned her head against the dark velvet couch. Diamonds glittered on her neck and arms and hands: and trembled in her ears. There was no speck of colour about her dress, and its pure whiteness enhanced the rich glow of her brunette complexion. She still shaded her eyes with one hand, complaining of the light.

Sir John, having finished his game, was full of solicitude for her. Should he have the candles removed to another part of the room? Would she like a screen? Had she caught cold, or what was it? Her eyes were usually so strong! Being now the central object of attraction, her spirits rose buoyantly. She coquetted and commanded, and made Sir John move and remove the wax tapers a dozen times before their position was satisfactory to her. At last he got tired, and rang for Paul to carry them away and bring a shaded lamp instead. Barletti looked on admiringly, and when, on the lamp being carried in, there appeared in its wake a tray with galantine, and chicken, and wine, and sweets (these English are such eaters!) his spirits rose too, and they were all three quite brilliant over the little impromptu supper. The conversation was carried on in French, Sir John not being able to speak Italian fluently. But suddenly Veronica addressed Barletti in Italian, and intensely enjoyed his admiring surprise at the purity of her accent.

"How admirably miladi speaks Italian!" he exclaimed, with enthusiasm.

"My mother was an Italian," said Veronica.

"Was she?" asked Sir John, carelessly. "Tiens! I never knew that. Or—stay—oh yes to be sure! I think I remember hearing it mentioned."

"How distract you are to-night!" said Veronica, with an assumption of tolerant good humour.

Cesare Barletti took away in his brain three themes on which his thoughts, passions, and prejudices, made endless variations, as he drove down the Avenue of the Poggio Imperiale. The first was:—It is odd that a man should not know or remember who his wife's mother was! The second was:—*miladi* wanted to make it appear that Gale was speaking in preoccupation or absence of mind; now Gale is never "distract," it is not in his character. The third was:—That handsome creature is not an Englishwoman, *puro sangue*! The fact of her having had an Italian mother brings her more into the category of human beings whose manners and development I understand. I wonder whether she was offended with me because I did not fall at her feet when we were in the garden together, or, at least, make some preparations for a future prostration of myself at her shrine!

On this last theme the variations were brilliant and inexhaustible.

AS THE CROW FLIES.

DUE NORTH. LEEDS TO YORK.

FROM the baldest and highest point of Mickle Fell, the crown of Yorkshire, the crow surveys the great county, half as large as Holland, which he is about to traverse on his swift way to his final roosting place on the tower of Berwick-upon-Tweed. The bird sees beneath him, small as toy houses, those great monastic ruins of Rievaulx, Fountains, Kirkstall, Bolton, and Jorvaulx; while the castles of Knaresborough and Pontefract, Skipton and York, Richmond and Scarborough, wake up the old bird's memory of the days of the Cliffords and Mowbrays, the Lacys and the Scropes, names that still make the heart of a true Yorkshireman beat with a warmer and a fuller pulse. The eastern cliff-ramparts washed by the German Ocean, the bracing moors and fells, the green and laughing vales, the great manufacturing cities, smoking like witches' caldrons, and larded with spikes of factory chimneys, lie before the crow, and threaten to tempt him from the even tenor of his flight over those fair rivers, the Humber, the Wharfe, the Nid, and the Derwent, that stretch far beneath his airy road their silver clues to the labyrinth he has to traverse.

First descending through clouds of smoke

and steam, he alights on the black shore of the Aire. He is in Leeds, paradise of clothiers, murky Eden of woollen manufacturers. The street and market talk is of swansdowns and kerseymeres, and of shoddy also. Half the wool of the West Riding passes through the many thousand busy and sinewy Yorkshire hands that force wool into new and higher forms in the good town of Leeds.

During the civil wars, when the Scropes and the Fairfaxes were shouting their rival battle cries, Leeds was nearly always Parliamentary. There had not been much fighting on the banks of the Aire since, in 655, Penda, the hoary Pagan tyrant, who in his time had slain three East Anglian and two Northumbrian kings (such as they were), at last fell in a great rout of his Mercians on the shores of the overflowing Aire, twenty of his vassal chieftains perishing with him on the field or in the flood. After many centuries the war fever seethed up hotly once more in the veins of the staunch men of the West Riding. In January, 1643, Sir Thomas Fairfax, of Denton, marched on the clothiers' town, with six troops of horse, three companies of dragoons, one thousand musketeers, and two thousand club men from Bradford. Sir William Saville, the Royalist commandant, returning a haughty answer to the summons to surrender, Sir Thomas drove straight at the town with colours flying, beating the garrison from their outworks and killing their cannoniers. The storm lasted two hours, at the end of which time Fairfax, followed by Sir Henry Fowles and Captain Forbes, hewed his way into the town, taking five hundred Cavalier prisoners and two brass cannons, with good store of ammunition. Sir William Saville fled, and got safely across the Aire, but his sergeant-major, Beaumont, was drowned in trying to follow his leader. The Puritans only lost twenty or thirty men in the short but hot assault.

Briggate and Kirkgate both remained tolerably quiet till 1647, when the Scotch army having generously surrendered King Charles, the rueful king passed through Leeds a prisoner. It was on that occasion, when Charles was lodged at Red Hall, that John Harrison, the great Leeds merchant, nobly came

True as the dial to the sun,
Although it be not shone upon,

and coaxing and forcing his way through the sullen and morose musketeers, knelt, and with bowed head, presented his majesty

with what he smilingly called, "a tankard of right home-brewed excellent ale." The guards sympathising with the gift, and seeing its apparent harmlessness, withdrew, but when the king lifted the lid of the great silver flagon, lo! and behold, it was brimming with yellow gold pieces, which the royal gentleman in trouble, with his usual craft, took care to instantly stow away in his big pockets, dismissing the kindly giver with a gracious smile. The husband of a female servant, who offered to help the king that night to escape, was, after the Restoration, appointed, by a not too grateful monarch, the king's chief bailiff in Yorkshire; and growing rich, he built for his disport Crosby House, in Upperhead Row. Thoresby has another version of this story. He says, Charles at the time was in the land of the Scots, and on his way from Newark to Newcastle, and so far the worthy old gentleman errs exceedingly. While the king was at Red Hall, a zealous maid-servant of Alderman Metcalf's entreated the king to change clothes with her and so escape: she promised, if he did, to lead him in the dark out of the garden door into a back alley, called Land's Lane, and thence to a friend's house, who would forward him safely to France. The obstinate king, however, declined the offer of the generous woman with thanks, and gave her a token (the legend says the Garter, which is unlikely), saying that if it were never in his own power, on sight of that token his son would hereafter reward her.

Before the crow dismisses good Mr. Thoresby, let the bird cull one or two choice notes of that worthy's Leeds memorabilia, and first, a note on Leeds strength (1658—1725). Thoresby mentions Ralph Dimsdale, a cloth-worker, who, vexed at a carrier complaining that a certain pack of cloth would break his horse's back, lifted up the bale and carried it easily as a Hercules, from Alderman Ibbotson's house to the churchyard. He also records the strength of Mr. Thomas Smallwood, a chaplain in the Parliamentary army, who, to outbrave the soldiers, would sometimes lift at arm's length three pikes (fourteen feet long each) tied together. A note of memory, too: one Miss Dorothy Dixon, of Hunslet Lane, when a child, was able to remember nearly a whole sermon, "letter perfect," as actors say. Of swiftness: Edmund Preston, the Leeds butcher, could run twice round Chapeltown Moor (a four-mile course) in fourteen minutes. It was roughly calculated that three

thousand pounds had been won by this man's heels. This Hare-foot died in 1700, of a wound received from a stake as he was skipping over a hedge after some stray sheep. Of strange sympathies: a note of one Mr. Thomas Sharp, who died at Leeds in 1693. At the very hour of his dissolution a distant friend and townsman of his fell into a bitter agony of tears and vehement passion of apprehension, so that he could not continue dressing himself, but stood naked till he could send a messenger to inquire for the sick man. Impatient of the messenger's return, the master hastened after him, and found Mr. Sharp just dead, and the shroud not yet wrapped round him. A note of longevity: one Mr. Thomas Bernard, of Leeds, fifty years old when he married, had eighteen children, rode briskly to hunting when he was above a hundred, and could then read without spectacles.

But we may have too much even of old Thoresby, so the crow, launching from the top of the domed tower of the Town Hall, which only wants "just a something" to rival the great Hôtels de Ville of Flanders, pushes on over moor and valley for the city of York, stately crowned by its triple tiara of minster towers, above the Ouse, and nearly midway between London and Edinburgh; and from that tower the crow looks down greetingly on Severus's Hills and many a fertile square of pasture. The warlike Scots, with then a strong tendency southward, besieged this city, aided by the Britons, in the reign of Severus (207); they were under a Scythian leader. (Heaven only knows how a Russian or Tartar general ever got promoted to such a post in those days.) The Emperor Severus, though old and gouty, drove the Scotch wasps off with his cohorts, who then marched into the Lowlands, cutting down forests, making roads, and draining marshes as they moved. The march, however, is said to have cost him fifty thousand men, for the Scotch even then never gave any one more than two shillings for half-a-crown, and were grim, shoulder to shoulder, canny, hard to beat kind of bodics. Severus then turned the eighty miles of earth rampart that the Emperor Hadrian had made (he also had lived at York) into stone, from the Solway Firth to Wallsend, where coals were then scarcely sufficiently appreciated. On a second revolt of the Scots, the old emperor, like Edward the First, vowed their entire extermination, but death stopped his march at the

very threshold of the Palace of Eboracum (York). Feeling his blood chilling at the source, and worn by long Syrian and Caledonian campaigns, he called to his bedside his two evil sons, Geta the dog, and Caracalla the wolf. "I leave you, my sons," he said, "a firm government. I found the republic torn and disturbed; cherish the legions." Then to his attendants, the Cæsar said: "I have been all, and yet am no better for it now." It was Solomon's bitter sigh of "vanity of vanities" over again. He next asked for the golden urn in which his ashes were to be conveyed to Rome, and earnestly looking at it, said, "Thou shalt soon hold what the whole world could scarcely contain." Soon after he calmly departed, meeting King Death as a king should meet a king. The body of this Roman emperor was burnt on a great pile of wood on one of those three hills near Holdgate, on which the crow has already fixed his keen eye. After this old man's death there was hideous work at the city on the Ouse, for discord sowed envy and hatred in the hearts of the brothers, and Caracalla, the stronger and more evil spirit of the two, fearing Geta with the army, first massacred twenty thousand of his adherents in the ranks, then led by the devil from bad to worse, ended by stabbing Geta in his mother's arms.

Now the crow, taking a bold flight over centuries, alights on a later scene of tragic horror, which Shakespeare has painted in Rembrandt's finest manner. Those blood-thirsty Wars of the Roses culminated in that terrible day of retaliation at York in 1460. The pretender to the crown unwisely allowed himself, in all the reckless arrogance of his nature, to be shut up in his castle of Sendal with only six thousand men at arms, while the Duke of Somerset, a king's man, beleaguered him with eighteen thousand. York's faithful old counsellor, Sir David Hale, entreated his master not to venture forth into the open till joined by his son (afterwards Edward the Fourth) with reinforcements, but Queen Margaret's insults and sneers, that it was disgraceful to a man who aspired to a crown to be shut up in a castle, and by a woman, too, were not to be borne by a proud, self-willed general.

"Hast thou loved me so long," he said, "and wouldst thou have me now dishonoured? Thou never sawest me keep fortress when I was regent in Normandy. No; like a man I always issued forth and fought mine enemies, ever to their

loss and my own honour. I will fight them now, Davy, though I fight them alone."

The Duke of York then marched out, and drew up his small army on Wakefield Green. The Duke of Somerset came to meet him in three divisions, himself in the centre, Lord Clifford on the left, and the Earl of Worcester on the right. The Duke of York began by a bull-like rush straight at the heart of his enemies, but they outflanked him, and slowly lapped him in with a flood of swords, lances, and axes. The fight was hand to hand—the hatred embittered by past mutual cruelties. A priest, the tutor to Rutland, York's second son, escaped from the mêlée, and hurried with his charge into Wakefield, but cruel Clifford, observing the lad's rich dress, spurred after him, and, on the bridge, overtook him and the priest.

"Save him!" cried the good monk, "he is the son of a prince, and may do you good hereafter."

"Son of York!" shouted the savage Lancastrian, whose own child had been slain at the battle of St. Albans: and seizing the boy by the hair, he said, "thy father slew mine child, and so will I thee and all thy kin," and stabbed him to the heart. The Duke of York, too, was dragged to a mound and placed on it in mockery as on a throne. The soldiers twisted a crown of grass, and paying him derisive homage, shouted,

"Hail, king without a kingdom! Hail, prince without a people!"

Then they forced him on his knees and struck off his head. This gory and hideous trophy Clifford stuck on a lance, and with his own hands presented to the she-wolf Margaret, saying, with a bitter laugh,

"Madame, your war is done, here is the ransom of your king."

The pale head was then decked with a paper crown, and by order of Margaret of Anjou, and amid the ruthless laughter of her courtiers, placed over the inside of Micklegate Bar, with the blind heedless face turned towards the city. The Earl of Salisbury and other noblemen were sent to Pomfret and beheaded, and their heads also placed over the gates of York. About three thousand Yorkists fell in this bloody and cruel battle.

But nearly all that York has seen or done historically, happened in the Minster, and the crow, on the highest tower, now sits, as it were, in inquest over the coronation place of many happy and unhappy kings. A church has stood where the fair Minster

now rises, ever since the Easter of 627, when Paulinus baptised the newly converted Edwin, King of Northumberland, in a little wooden oratory hastily built for the occasion; the woodwork was soon replaced by stone. The Minster was partly destroyed by fire, once in 1137, then in 1829, and, lastly, in 1840 by the carelessness of plumbers. The fire of 1829 was the work of a mad sailor, named Martin, who believed Heaven had sent visions to tell him to burn the Minster, where the prayers and sermons vexed him as being mere forms, and not prayers of the heart. This fanatic lodged with a York shoemaker, whose house he left some days before the fire, saying he was going to reside at Leeds. The fire was on Monday morning; on the Saturday previous Martin suddenly returned to his old lodgings, to his landlord's surprise. Martin, however, told the shoemaker that, having twenty of his books to sell in Tadcaster, he had settled to come on to York. He left on Monday early, and did not return. He took with him from the old shoemaker's a pair of pincers, afterwards found on a stool near the last window of the north transept, from which a knotted rope was hanging.

About a week after the fire Martin was taken at Hexham, in Northumberland. He told everything with fanatical exultation and triumph. At evening service he had "laid down beside the Bishop"—that is, hidden himself behind the tomb of Archbishop Greenfield. Having heard the man come down from the belfry after ringing the bell for evening service, he soon went up there, struck a light with a flint and razor, then cut about a hundred feet of rope, and, being a sailor, soon constructed a scaling ladder, and went up, hand over hand, over the gates into the choir, where there was most woodwork for his purpose. He had taken care to bring a wax candle, tinder, and some brimstone matches. When he got down into the choir the madman fell on his knees and thanked God, but felt a voice say he would be caught, do what he would. The fringe and tassels from the pulpit and bishop's throne he carried off to prove the fire was his work, and also to adorn a hairy jacket he had at Lincoln. When he had torn up the prayer books and music books in heaps ready to light, "Glory to God," he told the York magistrates, "I never felt so happy, but I had a hard night's work of it, particularly with a hungered belly." He regretted he could not save the big Bible, but

he could not get it over the choir gates. What the Lord had given him for his hire he tied up in his handkerchief; and while he was so doing he kept shouting, "Glory to God" so often and so loud that he only wondered it was not heard outside. The mad sailor, who was confined as a lunatic, died in 1858. It is a curious fact that up to the time of his death, although expressly forbidden to draw the Minster or to write about it, he was always (with a madman's craft) drawing portions of it from memory under pretence of making drawings of Kenilworth and other ruins. To the last he believed that in a dream he had seen a cloud reaching from the Minster to the shoemaker's shop where he lodged, and that he had seen an angel shoot an arrow through the Minster door. The great organ burst with a tremendous noise during this lamentable fire. All the choir carving was destroyed, the tombs of Archbishops Sterne and Sharp were injured. The rood loft was burnt, with all the oak tabernacle work, and the celebrated screen between the choir and Lady Chapel had to be rebuilt. A curious old altar chair and the great brass eagle were saved in spite of the torrents of molten lead and the falling rafters.

One of the greatest curiosities in the Minster is the horn of Ulphus, which is of ivory mounted in brass. It is preserved in a chapel on the south side of the choir, which is used as a vestry, museum, and register room. This Ulphus, the son of Toraldus, was a Danish chieftain, who ruled the west part of Deira. A difference arising between his eldest and youngest sons about the succession after his death, he adopted a plan to make their shares equal. He rode to York with his largest drinking horn, and, filling it with wine, went on his knees before the altar, and bestowed upon God and the blessed Saint Peter all his lands, tenements, and personal wealth. There is property to the east of York which still bears his name. This horn was stolen in the reign of Elizabeth, but restored to the church by one of the Fairfaxes, shorn of its precious settings. It was remounted by the Dean and Chapter in 1675 (Charles the Second). There is in this chapel also a curious pastoral staff of silver given by Queen Catherine to her confessor when he was nominated Catholic Archbishop of York by James the Second. It is said that when marching insolently in procession to the Minster, the Earl of Darley con-

fronted him, and wresting the new sceptre from the Pretender's hand gave it to the Dean and Chapter.

DAME MARTHA'S WELL.

DAME MARTHA bode in Sonderland,
A good and gentle dame;
When the winter was long and the rich man hard,
To her the poor folk came.

The hungry ate out of her hand,
The sickly took her bed,
And to the sinful wrongdoer
Sweet words of peace she said.

She was not rich in gold nor gear,
But all might share her best;
Silver nor gold she could not give,
But the crust she gave was blest

There came fierce foemen from afar,
Over the salt sea tide:
With fire and sword they laid full low
The hamlets far and wide.

From east to west in Sonderland
A fire ran bloody red:
Dame Martha's house was burnt full low,
And its gentle lady fled.

She fled unto a lonely tower,
To the sad kirkyard nigh,
Only the owl from his dark lair
Looked down with round bright eye.

Hungry and thirsty she abode
Unseen, apart from men;
Not a drop of all that she had given
Was given to her again.

But when the dark and bloody band
Again forsook that shore,
Dame Martha found her ruined house,
And built it up once more.

The hungry ate out of her hand,
The sickly took her bed,
And to the sinful wrongdoer
Sweet words of peace she said.

For many a day unto her door
They came from far and wide;
But many a human wanderer wept
The day Dame Martha died.

The kirk bell sounded sad and low,
Man, child, and woman, wept;
Wearily to the sad kirkyard
They bare her as she slept.

And when they passed the lonely tower
Where she in need had fled,
The bearers sat the black bier down,
And prayed, and blessed the dead.

And as they prayed with tearful eyes,
There sprang beneath the bier,
Out of the ground, a little well
Of water, crystal clear.

And still in rocky Sonderland
The village gossips tell,
The sick may drink and straight be healed
Out of Dame Martha's well.

God's blessing on the gentle soul,
Not rich in gold and gear,
That in the midst of evil days
Gleams up like water clear.

Like crystal clear, the gentle soul
Doth from the cold ground burst.
God bless the little wayside well
Refreshing all that thirst!

A DEADLY MIST.

SUNDAY morning by the sea. The early church bells going. A close sea-mist hanging heavily over the sands, and a baffled sun trying to make light of it, and failing. My window wide open, though sere October is growing old, and one long melancholy ripple of smooth sea wailing slowly along the shore. I have had a good breakfast, a fine romp with my children, and my wife is dressing for church. Everything with me is very calm and very happy; but only an hour ago I was in mortal peril of my life, and, instead of being in this pleasant room, with the voices of my little children outside breaking on my ear, and with the wash of the wave on the beach below my window setting a bass to their sweet treble, I might have been at this moment floating white and stiff on the still sea, with the thick mist hanging around me, and this world's loves and cares over with me for ever.

It was such a simple affair, such an easy way in which to meet one's death, that it is only the thought of what might have been, that gives warmth and colour to the contrast with what is: and I am filled with that feeling—which all men must have felt when they have learned how to feel—of respite, and escape, and of a longer trial allowed, another chance permitted. I am sure no one who has ever been consciously and calmly face to face with death will fail to understand what I mean.

One hour ago, only an hour, I went out, as usual, to bathe. The sands run up to my very windows, and the high tides sometimes touch the little wall that stands in front, so that I can often walk from my own hall-door into the water at a few yards' distance. But this morning the tide was dead out, and a heavy sea-fog was lying all over the sands, so that I could not see where the water and the land joined. I had not gone twenty yards until, looking back, I saw my house looming through the fog, quite altered in appearance, and, though much larger, still much more distant than usual. In a few more steps I lost it altogether. I soon came to the water's edge, took off my overall, and laid it on a flat stone: the only stone I could see, for there are no rocks.

The sea was dead calm, and I had to wade a long way out before I got deep enough for a plunge, after which I began to swim. The water was not too cold, there was not even a languid heave on its surface, and I struck out, enjoying the free motion, until I began to feel tired. I am a bad swimmer, and had never knowingly gone out of my depth. Dropping my feet I found myself up to the neck, and I then suddenly perceived that I was closely encircled by a dense mist, and was utterly at a loss to know which way the shore lay. The tide, I knew, was rising fast. I could not trust myself to swim, lest I should be swimming out to sea, instead of towards the land. I made a step or two in one direction, then in another, but always seemed to be getting deeper. Then, like a sudden blow, came upon me the full sense of my situation. Here I was, opposite my own door, where my wife and little children were waiting for me, within perhaps two hundred yards of dry land, dangerously deep in the water, and helplessly unable to find my way out.

The peril was imminent. I must have been, I now think, on the top of a low bank of sand, and, though shallow water and safety must have been within twenty yards of me, I could not, to save my life, tell which way to turn. It flashed on me that I should be drowned: drowned quietly and surely, within gunshot of my home; and that the flowing tide, there being no current and no wind, would float my dead body up, and leave it on the sands before my door. The danger was terrible: yet there was no hurry. The tide was rising fast, but I could not be drowned for at least ten minutes, and I had that time before me to do what I could with. It would never do to die like this, without an effort to save my life, but it was utterly impossible to say in what direction that effort should be made. The fog seemed to settle down closer and closer around me, and the water was rising steadily, but very slowly, the surface of the sea being like oil.

Something had to be done, and quickly. I stood quite still, and looked to see if there were any ripple of current against my neck that would show the inflow of the tide. There was none. I held up my wet arm to feel for a wind. There was not a breath. I strained my ears to hear any noise—the barking of a dog, voices on the land, the crowing of cocks, anything that would answer me, to me, tremendous question, Where is the shore?

Not a sound. The stillness was awful and horrible. To shout for help was the last resort; but I would not spend my strength in that, until I had tried everything else; and I knew, besides, that being a Sunday morning, and the sands deserted, there would be neither boat nor boatman on the shore. I remembered, too, that voices in a fog almost always seem to change their direction, and that they mislead those who come in search. Steadily and without noise the tide rose up, until the water reached my chin. I was perfectly collected, and endeavoured to recal all I had read of similar emergencies, tried back in my memory to find, if I could, some chance for life that some one else in deadly peril had risked and won. Holding my breath, and laying my ear close to the water, I strained every nerve of hearing in vain; but where the one sense on which I was depending failed me, another came to my rescue. Between the dense mist and the water, there seemed to be about an inch of interval, and through this chink, as it were, I saw the dusky base of a stone beacon which I knew stood out in the sea, nearly opposite my house. Here was a chance, and with an instant thrill of joy at having gained at last some idea of the direction in which an effort for life might be made, I struck out and swam to the beacon, where I laid hold of an iron bar which served to stay it to the rock below.

When the momentary exultation was over, I found I was not much better off than before. I had the beacon to hold to, and could even climb to the top, which was still a foot above the surface of the sea; but I knew it would be covered deep at half tide. Still here was more time gained; and the fear of death, or I should rather say, the settled assurance without fear, passed from me. Climbing to the top of the beacon, I tried if I could look out over the mist, but it was thicker than ever. Now came a curious illustration of the extraordinary closeness together of what we are accustomed to consider as our most opposed mental and moral emotions. I had just been in deadly peril of my life, and what I had gained was, perhaps, but a short respite. The danger was less imminent, still it was not past. I had been as near my death as ever I shall be until the end does come; yet I was so suddenly struck with the absurdity of my appearance—a naked man perched like a crane on a stone beacon in a white fog—that I burst into a roar of laughter.

Like an arrow through the mist came the quick bark of a terrier, followed by a cry of "Papa!" It was my little daughter's voice. She and Snap had gone down to the beach to look for me, had found my overall, and were quietly waiting beside it. The sound of her voice was like that of an angel calling through the dark. With a glad heart I dropped off the beacon, and, after swimming a few strokes, found my feet on firm land once again.

A very commonplace incident; but it has given me something to think about this Sunday morning; and I am rather afraid that I may be but an inattentive auditor of our good parson's sermon on the perils of dissent, which I am to hear in the church by-and-by.

LECTURES FOR LADIES.

WE don't concern ourselves with the high philosophical question, whether women have or have not a right to be field-marshal and members of parliament, or to receive delicate attentions from the Man in the Moon at election time. It is not yet a heresy to think that they have their own particular part, and that a noble one, assigned to them in the great drama of life, and that although they may roar gently as a sucking dove, they will hardly find it worth while to play lion too. Quite apart from the contest for a new settlement of woman's rights, is the ground taken by those who have of late been acting on the general opinion that ignorance is not one of the gifts and graces of life, and that women, being as quick witted as men, were not born to be dunces.

The character of boys' schools has been raised by open examinations for certificates or degrees from the universities, and by the establishment in other ways of a standard of good education, which must be attained in every school that hopes to stand well with the public. But there never has been any test of the efficiency of girls' schools. The master of a boys' school usually has gone through a course of training which has enabled him to show distinct credentials, in evidence that he has himself learnt what he undertakes to teach. The most accomplished lady who should undertake to teach girls has been, in this respect, pretty much on a level with the veriest little goose, who shows her ignorance in nothing so much as in the belief that she is qualified to keep a school. The highly-educated woman could produce no evidence of thorough training, and, indeed, could have obtained such training only by quiet persistence in almost unaided exertion: while the higher education of men is assisted lavishly by money and endowments, by the energies of picked instructors, by social influence, the prompting of ambition, and the whole strength of a public

opinion which at one time was even half disposed to find bliss in the ignorance of women. Dr. Parr said in his Discourse on Education, little more than eighty years ago, that "as to the acquisitions of reading and writing, they are eminently serviceable to boys; but in regard to females I do not conceive them to be of equal use, unless they be accompanied by other attainments of a more domestic nature." And although the founder of Christ's Hospital designed that institution for both boys and girls, the strength of the old prejudice has resulted in the establishment of first-class educational training for more than a thousand boys, and provision for about two dozen girls of the instruction suitable for a maid-servant. The time is gone by, that bred men to speak and act in this fashion, and the natural demands of society have produced in many quarters sensible improvement of the character of girls' schools. Many a girl who can sketch, and sing, and not only read, but speak easily and well, one or two modern languages, is better educated than her brother, who has murdered Latin verse at Eton: at Eton as it used to be; for tradition there also has yielded of late to the vigorous life of the time, and modern languages have taken their place as an essential part of the training.

But in the best girls' schools, main reliance has usually to be placed on "masters." To men who have given public evidence of their knowledge of a subject, or who have passed honourably through their university career, schoolmistresses entrust the main part of the higher education of girls. About sixteen years ago, ladies' colleges were established, which still flourish in Harley-street and Bedford-square, London. Their aim was to do for girls what is done for boys when they have gone through their school course. In these institutions, ladies are active in giving subordinate or additional instruction, but they take no part in the main business of teaching, if we may judge from the last list, now before us, of "Subjects and Teachers," at Queen's College, Harley-street, in which every teacher is a Mr., and there is not one Mrs. or Miss. Given a man and a woman equally well acquainted with some subject, the man is likely to be found, for pupils of either sex, the more efficient teacher. The more retiring character and the more sensitive nature, while they quicken home delight, unfit, to some extent, for the work of public teaching. The man with bolder front and blunter sensibilities can bear the fret and fatigue of teaching, with less strain upon his patience, and can get from his work all the intellectual enjoyment it brings, while he goes through it patiently, calmly. Wind and rain are not the only sort of elements with which his harder nature has made him more fit than a woman to contend. Women lay the foundations of all teaching, in girl and boy. They teach men daily by their influence: in the highest sense, no doubt, they are the best teachers in the world. But they are, to some degree, through qualities allied to all that is

best in their character, less fit than men for professional school teaching or public speaking, otherwise than by the pen.

One object of the founders of the Ladies' Colleges in Harley-street and Bedford-square was to supply the want of some standard of knowledge to which ladies, by obtaining their certificates, could show they had attained. A like help has been since extended to others by the Working Women's College in Queen-square. And still ladies who wish to prove that they are qualified teachers, often finish their education in France, for the sake of the certificate of fitness to teach obtainable under the French system.

But this object has now been attained for Englishwomen more effectually, by the liberal action of the Universities of Cambridge and London. A committee interested in advancement of education among girls, obtained leave from the Cambridge Syndicate to place, at a private examination, before pupils from various girls' schools, the papers given to the candidates sent up from boys' schools to the Cambridge local examinations of the year eighteen 'sixty-three. At six weeks' notice, ninety-one girls were collected as competitors in this private examination; fifty-seven of them failed, and of those who failed ninety per cent were rejected for arithmetic alone. In the year 'sixty-five, local examinations for girls were officially recognised as part of the Cambridge system. The teachers of the girls had learnt the sharp lesson taught by their first failure, and, at the next trial, of the girls who were rejected, only three failed in arithmetic. One could not desire better proof of the efficacy of a system of strict and impartial test, applied from without, in raising the standard of preliminary education. No doubt the finest and best minds are not necessarily those which come out best from the rough test of a competitive examination. To some senior students, the work for examination, and to some teachers the training for examination, must be absolutely a clog on the best use of their minds. But the wholesome effect upon the great average mass of the teachers and taught, is shown too clearly to be doubtful; while the mind apt for original and independent work can bear easily a short period of constraint, and may be only the more apt afterwards for its appointed uses. The Cambridge local examinations have, since 'sixty-five, been applied every year as tests of the school training of both girls and boys. The girls have slipped back in their arithmetic, and the last report says that, in this subject, "more efficient teaching is urgently required." The boys beat the girls in algebra, but in one year a girl greatly distinguished herself in applied mathematics. In French, boys and girls are about equal; but the girls know the grammar best; the boys trusting too much to analogies drawn from their imperfect knowledge of Latin. In German, the girls always do best, and they write better answers to history questions, "more straightforward and to the

point," and with "fewer attempts at fine writing." They beat the boys also in their studies of Shakespeare; surpass them, says one examiner, "in analysis of character and choice of language." In languages, also, they translate generally with greater spirit, and show a livelier interest in the subject matter; "express themselves more idiomatically, write and spell better, and are far less frequently guilty of putting down manifest absurdities."

This vivacity of mind rightly employed, becomes, no doubt, rather alarming to the stolid young man who was a booby at school, and counts for a booby in the world among his male acquaintances, but whose consolation is that he may hope not to be known for a booby in his home. Let him take heart. On this side Millennium, it will never be impossible for that young man to find a wife more stupid than himself; or he may even find a Titania content to take him, Bottom, for better for worse, and worship him as long as he will love her. The true woman is only more a woman for the quickening of her whole nature that culture brings with it. Instead of confounding the difference of mind between women and men, true education gives intensity to the real characters of each, points all the more strongly their differences, quickens their natural action and reaction on each other, doubles at once the delight and usefulness of their companionship. The woman so prepared is all the mother to her children, keen to appreciate their efforts, prompt and wise in sympathy, and by the subtle powers of her love and knowledge arms their souls for conquest in the strife to come. Starvation or insufficiency of diet acts on the mind as on the body. It may die into lunacy by a too complete want of substantial food for thought, or, ill-fed, may fall away into mere sickly feebleness. The shape and fashion of the plough does not so much concern the farmer, as the fact that there should be ploughing and sowing if the earth is to yield food for man. The best tilled ground must have its seasons of fallow, and the best trained mind needs times of holiday; but steady culture of some kind is essential, if the mind of man or woman is not to become a wilderness of weed and thistle. Women, with active intelligence that is, if anything, even more restless than the wit of men, must suffer in their minds if they are debarred from intellectual employments. No doubt most women are more apt than men for some studies and less apt for others. But experience has now shown clearly that in average ability and in capacity for steady work, there is no natural difference between boys and girls, and that if there be any between men and women, it is simply due to the fact that men hitherto have received better training in their youth. The University of Cambridge has added to its local examinations an "Examination for Women" who are beyond the age of eighteen years and six months. According to this plan, established in the present year, the obtaining of a certificate depends upon know-

ledge of arithmetic, of the English language, literature and history (with religious knowledge, if not specially objected to), and of two languages, or else two sciences, or else mathematics, or else political economy and logic.

In the present year, also, the University of London has held the first of the examinations authorised by a supplemental charter obtained two years ago—in August 'sixty-seven—to enable it to hold special examinations of women who wish for certificates of proficiency. The candidates for these certificates must be above the age of seventeen. Having succeeded in this first examination, they may proceed in the following year to an examination for certificates of higher value. The first test or "general examination," corresponds in severity to that of the matriculation examination for young men. A proposal to lower the standard a little, in consideration of the weaker character of the preliminary teaching in girls' schools, was wisely resisted. Without any special mercy to their sex (which would only have been special slight to their endeavours) the ladies who came up for examination were tested in Latin, including Roman history and geography; and in two other languages, which might be Greek, French, German, or Italian; in the English language, history and geography, in mathematics, in natural philosophy, and in chemistry or botany. The successful candidates were to be arranged in an honours division, and in a first and second division without honours. Nine came up, of whom six passed; and they were all six in the honours division. Of course, the few who were first to take advantage of this opportunity were from the number of those most alive to its value, and this fact, as well as the small number offered for comparison with the large number of young men who come up to matriculate, make it unfair to lay any stress on the fact that the greater per-centage of success was on the side of female candidates. Still there was the success; and there is reason to expect that the beginning has been made of a system of successive examinations by which highly-educated women, who desire to obtain confidence as teachers, or for other reasons find it valuable to have the degree of their attainments tested, will be enabled to show university certificates of value corresponding to the recognised degrees earned by young men. The last act of this kind is the establishment of a college near Cambridge for girl students, which is now just opened. At present it occupies a house at Hitchin, in Hertfordshire, and it is "designed to hold, in relation to girls' schools, a position analogous to that occupied by the universities towards the public schools for boys." The desire of its council is to connect this with the other Cambridge colleges, by obtaining from the University of Cambridge permission for its girl students to compete in the examination for degrees.

Obviously there is not the smallest necessary connexion between all this recent movement for improving the education of women and

questions of political rights. A few other social rights are, at the same time, winning wider recognition—a woman's right to her own earnings, for example; but her social right to opportunities of healthy cultivation of the mind may now surely be taken as past question.

How wholesomely the recent movement has grown out of the daily life of women in our day, and the steady, quiet endeavour of women themselves to escape from the stagnation of thought to which many of them had long been doomed, is shown by the rapid rise of a new system of lectures to ladies. In town after town, during the last two years, wherever there is a university or staff of college teachers, these lectures have been springing up, and the want they meet is so real that they will become one of the established customs of the country. The honour of their first establishment is due, we believe, to Edinburgh: though the suggestion is said to have been first made in the north of England. Six ladies of Edinburgh, about two years ago, succeeded in establishing the Edinburgh Ladies' Educational Association, founded, supported, and managed, by ladies only. They looked to professors of the University of Edinburgh for the fulfilment of their object. Ladies who had passed through the stages of school training, and needed for the stern uses of life higher education; or who sought the healthy occupation of some form of culture of the mind, while they fulfilled the home duties for which quickened intelligence would only make them the more apt, or took their places in society; might attend many stray lectures on popular science, or on literary subjects likely to amuse. But something more was asked on their behalf, and this was, that professors and teachers who are entrusted by our universities and colleges with particular parts of the higher education of men should also do something to meet the earnest wish of women who desired like help. Ladies, entirely by action of their own, formed themselves into classes, and asked to be taught as men are taught when they seek thoroughness of knowledge: not in lectures planned to entertain them, but in lectures that would show them how to work. The beginning was made in the session 'sixty-seven-eight, at Edinburgh, by the professor of English literature in the university. Two hundred and sixty-five ladies attended his course. Many of these came only to give support to the new movement, but at least ninety-four came to do steady work. In the following year, the number of courses was advanced from one to three; and courses of lectures were given in English literature, experimental physics, and logic with mental philosophy, each by the professor of its subject in the university. The number of ladies who attended was, for the English literature class, one hundred and thirty; for the physics, one hundred and forty; for the logic, seventy. Nearly simultaneous with this action at Edinburgh was the establishment of a "North of England Council for promoting the Higher

Education of Women." It has procured courses of lectures, chiefly from Cambridge professors, at Manchester, Leeds, Newcastle, and other towns. In the West of England the example has been followed in several towns. In Glasgow the example of Edinburgh was at once followed. The professor of natural history first gave a short course of geology to a class of seventy ladies, and this was followed last session by two courses, one on English literature, and the other on physical geography, to ladies' classes, numbering respectively three hundred and thirty-six and a hundred and forty.

At the beginning of this year, the example of the Edinburgh Ladies' Educational Association led to the formation of a London Ladies' Educational Association, with like objects, which looked for co-operation to the professors of University College, London. With wise promptitude it was resolved to be doing at once, and risk the chance of a poor start rather than spend a whole year in preparation. At very short notice, and with not much public announcement, two courses of lectures to ladies were begun at the Beethoven Rooms, in Harley-street: one by the professor of physics, and one by the professor of English literature at University College. Fifty-seven ladies entered to the class of physics, and a hundred and two to the class of literature. They attended steadily to the end of courses each of two dozen lectures; a considerable proportion of them wrote essays and exercises, and worked problems out. The work done, was as good as that done in an ordinary college class, and the success, as proved by the serious working attention given to both courses, emboldened the ladies' committee to attempt for their next session—beginning on the ninth of November this year—a greater extension of the system of lectures to ladies than has hitherto been ventured on elsewhere. Instead of two or three courses, six courses are now to be given; and the number of lectures in a course is raised, without increase of fee, from two dozen to three dozen: the subjects being, physics and English literature again (different sections of these subjects being taken), with the addition of French literature, Latin, geometry, and chemistry: each course being given by the professor of its subject in University College, London. Moreover, the scientific courses are now to be given (for more full use of the appliances necessary to such teaching), in the lecture rooms appropriated to them within the college walls: the ladies having not only an hour to themselves, but also separate entrances provided for them. Of course it remains to be seen whether so quick an advance towards a full scheme of aid to the higher education of Englishwomen, will be met in London by a sufficiently general desire for such education. The ladies who attend these classes, which admit none under seventeen, are chiefly of ages varying between seventeen and four-and-thirty. There are also older ladies who come in the faith that a right human desire for

knowledge ends only with life—never, if death be not the end of life—or who come that they may take an active helpful interest in the studies of their daughters. The movement has originated chiefly among ladies whose associations in life are with the more intellectual half of the upper middle class, and from such it has had its chief support; but high fees and fashionable accessories have been studiously avoided; and wherever these lectures have been established, there is absolute exclusion of all petty sense of clique and caste. The striving governess sits by the fashionable lady; as in the college class room the poor student who will hereafter battle hard for bread, sits on equal terms by the inheritor of thousands. Our English ladies—honour to them for it!—have, in fact, without effort, brought into the lecture rooms of their establishing, with other requisites, that fine catholic spirit which should be inseparable from a place of study.

THE FISHERS OF LOCH BOISDALE.

THE Tern's* first anchorage in the Long Island was at Loch Boisdale, and it was there that the dreary landscape of the Uist began to exercise its deep fascination over the Wanderer's mind. We lay at the usual place, close to the pier and inn, in the full enjoyment of the ancient and fish-like smell wafted to us from the curing places ashore. The herring-fishers had nearly all departed, save one or two native crews who were still labouring leisurely; but they had left their débris everywhere—skeletons of huts, piles of peat, fish-bones, scraps of rotten nets, even broken pots and dishes. One or two huts, some entirely of wood, stood empty, awaiting the return of their owners in the following spring. The whole place was deserted, its harvest time was over. When we rowed ashore in the punt, the population, consisting of two old men and some dirty little boys, received us in grim amazement and silence, until the advent of the innkeeper, who, repressing all outward symptoms of wonder, bade us a shy welcome and showed us the way to his establishment. The obvious impression was that we were insane; the tiny craft we had come over in, our wild and haggard appearance, and, above all, the fact that we had actually come to Loch Boisdale for pleasure (a fact unprecedented in the mind of the oldest inhabitant) all contributed to show our quality. The landlord was free and inquisitive, humouring us cunningly as the keepers do mad people, receiving all our statements calmly without contradic-

* See ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, vol. ii., p. 197.

tion, answering all our questions in the easy manner found useful in dealing with idiots and infants, and never thinking it worth while to correct us when we were wrong. As he sat chatting with us over a glass of whisky in a mildewy room of the inn, the inhabitants dropped in one by one; first the two old men, then a little boy, then a tipsy fisherman, and so on till the room was full of spectators, all with their mouths wide open, and all without any sign of ordering or drinking anything, staring at the strangers. This volley of eyes became at last so unbearable, that it was thought advisable to direct it elsewhere by ordering "glasses round;" a movement which, however grateful to the feelings, was received without enthusiasm, only the mouths and eyes opened still wider in amaze. The advent of the whisky, however, acted like a charm, and the company burst into a torrent of Gaelic, in which the words "Got taven" and "Sassenach" were easily distinguishable at intervals.

The result of a long conversation with the populace, which in number and appearance bore about the same relation to a respectable community that a stage "mob" in Julius Cæsar would bear to the real article, was not particularly edifying. The populace was cynical on the merits of Loch Boisdale; its principal beauties, in their opinion, being ague, starvation, and weariness. For any person to remain there, ever so short a time, who could by any possibility get out of it, was a thing not to be credited by common-sense. The innkeeper, however, tried to convey to us his comprehension that we had come there, not for pleasure, but "on a discovering manner," by which mystical Celticism he meant to say that we were visitors come to make inquiries, possibly with a view to commerce or statistics. He shook his head over both country and people, and seemed to think our inquiry was a waste of time.

For three days after that, it rained as it can rain only in the Long Island; and when at last, tired out of patience, we rushed ashore, our friend the innkeeper received us with a deprecating smile. With keen sarcasm, we demanded if it were always "that sort of weather" in Loch Boisdale, but he replied quite calmly, "Aye, much about." But when we sat down over usquebaugh, and the rain still plashing darkly without,

with its dull twofold sound,
The clash hard by, and the murmur all round!

showed that the weather was little likely to abate that day, the landlord seemed to think his credit at stake, and that even Loch Boisdale was appearing at a disadvantage. To console him, we told him that story of the innkeeper at Arrochar, which poor Hugh Macdonald used to retail with such unction over the toddy. An English traveller stayed for some days at Arrochar, and there had been nothing but rain from morn to night. The landlord tried to keep up his guest's spirits by repeated prophecies that the weather was "about to break up;" but at last, on the fifth day, the stranger could endure it no longer. "I say, landlord; have you ever—now on your honour—have you ever, any other sort of weather in this confounded place?" The landlord replied, humbly yet bitterly: "Speak nae mair, sir, speak nae mair—I'm just perfectly ashamed of the way in which our weather's behaving!" But the Loch Boisdale landlord seemed to think the tale too serious for laughter.

As we have noted above, the herring harvest was over. Twice in the year there is good fishing; in the spring and in the autumn; but the autumn fishing is left quite in the hands of a few native boats. The moment the spring fishing ends, Loch Boisdale subsides into torpor. All is desolate and still; only the fishy smell remains, to remind the yawning native of the glory that is departed.

A busy sight indeed is Loch Boisdale in the herring season. Smacks, open boats, skiffs, wherries, make the narrow waters shady; not a creek, however small, but holds some boat in shelter. A fleet, indeed! The Lochleven boat from the east coast, with its three masts and three huge lug-sails; the Newhaven boat with its two lug-sails; the Isle of Man "jigger;" the beautiful Guernsey runner, handsome as a racing yacht and powerful as a revenue-cutter; besides all the numberless fry of less noticeable vessels, from the fat west-country smack with its comfortable fittings down to the miserable Arran wherry.* Swarms of seagulls float everywhere, and the loch is

* The Arran wherry, now nearly extinct, is a wretched-looking thing without a bowsprit, but with two strong masts. Across the foremast is a small bulkhead, and there is a small locker for blankets and bread. In the open space between bulkhead and locker birch tops are thickly strewn for a bed, and for covering there is a huge woollen waterproof blanket ready to be stretched out on spars. Close to the mast lies a huge stone, and thereon a stove. The cable is of heather rope, the anchor wooden, and the stock a stone. Rude and ill-found as these boats are, they face weather before which any ordinary yachtsman would quail.

so oily with the fishy deposit that it requires a strong wind to ruffle its surface. Everywhere on the shore and hill sides, and on the numberless islands, rises the smoke of camps. Busy swarms surround the curing-houses and the inn, while the beach is strewn with fishermen stretched at length, and dreaming till night time. In the afternoon, the fleet slowly begins to disappear, melting away out into the ocean, not to reappear till long after the grey of the next dawn.

Did you ever go out for a night with the herring fishers? If you can stand cold and wet, you would enjoy the thing hugely, especially if you have a boating mind. Imagine yourself on board a west-country smack, running out of Boisdale harbour with the rest of the fleet. It is afternoon, and there is a nice fresh breeze from the south-west. You crouch in the stern by the side of the helmsman, and survey all around you with the interest of a novice. Six splendid fellows, in various picturesque attitudes, lounge about the great, broad, open hold, and another is down in the fore-castle boiling coffee. If you were not there, half of these would be taking their sleep down below. It seems a lazy business, so far; but wait! By sunset the smack has run fifteen miles up the coast, and is going seven or eight miles east of Ru Hamish lighthouse; many of the fleet still keep her company, steering thick as shadows in the summer twilight. How thick the gulls gather yonder! That dull plash ahead of the boat was the plunge of a solan goose. That the herrings are hereabout, and in no small numbers, you might be sure, even without that bright phosphorescent light which travels in patches in the water to leeward. Now is the time to see the lounging crew dart into sudden activity. The boat's head is brought up to the wind, and the sails are lowered in an instant.* One man grips the helm, another lugs out the back rope of the net, a third the "skunk," or body, a fourth is placed to see the buoys clear and heave them out, the rest attend forward, keeping a sharp look-out for other nets, ready, in case the boat should run too fast, to steady her by dropping the anchor a few fathoms into the sea. When all the nets are out, the boat is brought bow on to the net, the "swing" (as they call the rope attached to the net) secured to the smack's "bits," and all hands then lower the mast

as quickly as possible. The mast lowered, secured, and made all clear for hoisting at a moment's notice, and the candle lantern set up in the iron stand made for the purpose of holding it, the crew leave one look-out on deck, with instructions to call them up at a fixed hour, and turn in below for a nap in their clothes: unless it so happens that your brilliant conversation, seasoned with a few bottles of whisky, should tempt them to steal a few more hours from the summer night. Day breaks, and every man is on deck. All hands are busy at work, taking the net in over the bow, two supporting the body, the rest hauling the back rope, save one, who takes the net into the hold, and another who arranges it from side to side in the hold to keep the vessel even. Tweet! tweet! that thin cheeping sound, not unlike the razor-like call of the bat, is made by the dying herrings at the bottom of the boat. The sea to leeward, the smack's hold, the hands and arms of the men, are gleaming like silver. As many of the fish as possible are shaken loose during the process of hauling in, but the rest are left in the net until the smack gets to shore. Three or four hours pass away in this wet and tiresome work. At last, however, the nets are all drawn in, the mast is hoisted, the sail set, and while the cook (there being always one man having this branch of work in his department) plunges below to make breakfast, the boat makes for Loch Boisdale. Everywhere on the water, see the fishing-boats making for the same bourne, blessing their luck or cursing their misfortune, just as the fortune of the night may have been. All sail is set if possible, and it is a wild race to the market. Even when the anchorage is reached, the work is not quite finished; for the fish has to be measured out in "cran" baskets,* and delivered at the curing station. By the time that the crew have got their morning dram, have arranged the nets snugly in the stern, and have had some herrings for dinner, it is time to be off again to the harvest field. Half the crew turn in for sleep, while the other half hoist sail and conduct the vessel out to sea.

Huge, indeed, are the swarms that inhabit Boisdale, afloat or ashore, during this harvest; but, partly because each man has business on hand, and partly because there is plenty of sea room, there are few breaches of the peace. On Saturday night

* There is fashion everywhere. An east-country boat always shoots *across* the wind, of course carrying some sail, while a west-country boat shoots *before* the wind with bare poles.

* A cran holds rather more than a herring barrel, and the average value of a cran measure of herrings is about one pound sterling.

the public-house is crowded, and now and then the dull roar ceases for a moment as some obstreperous member is shut out summarily into the dark. Besides the regular fishermen and people employed at the curing stations, there are the herring gutters—women of all ages, many of whom follow singly the fortunes of the fishers from place to place. Their business is to gut and salt the fish, which they do with wonderful swiftness and skill. Hideous, indeed, looks a group of these women, defiled from head to foot with herring garbage, and laughing and talking volubly, while gulls innumerable float above them, and fill the air with their discordant screams. But look at them when their work is over, and they are changed indeed. Always cleanly, and generally smartly dressed, they parade the roads and wharf. Many of them are old and ill-favoured, but you will see among them many a blooming cheek and beautiful eye. Their occupation is a profitable one, especially if they be skilful; for they are paid according to the amount of work they do.

It is the custom of most of the east-country fishers to bring over their own women—one to every boat, sleeping among the men, and generally related to one or more of the crew. We have met many of these girls, some of them very pretty, and could vouch for their perfect purity. Besides their value as cooks, they can gut herrings and mend nets; but their chief recommendation in the eyes of the canny fishermen is that they are kith and kin, while the natives are strangers "no' to be trusted." The east-country fisherman, on his arrival, invariably encamps on shore, and the girl or woman "keeps the house" for the whole crew.

For, the east-country fisherman likes to be comfortable. He is at once the most daring and the most careful. He will face such dangers on the sea as would make most men die of fright; while at the same time he is as cautious as a woman in providing against cold and ague. How he manages to move in his clothes, is matter for marvel, for he is packed like a patient after the cold water process. Only try to clothe yourself in all the following articles of attire; pair of socks, pair of stockings over them half up the leg, to be covered by the long fishing boots; on the trunk, a thick flannel, covered with an oilskin vest; after that, a common jacket and vest; on the top of those, an oilskin coat; next, a mighty muffler to wind round the neck and

bury the chin and mouth; and last of all, the sou'-wester! This is the usual costume of an east-country fisherman, and he not only breathes and lives in it, but manages his boat better than any of his rivals on the sea. He drags himself along on land awkwardly enough; and on board, instead of rising to walk, he rolls, as it were, from one part of the boat to the other. He is altogether a more calculating dog than the west-country man, more eager for gain, colder and more reticent in all his dealings with human kind.

GREEN TEA.

A CASE REPORTED BY MARTIN HESSELIUS, THE
GERMAN PHYSICIAN.

IN TEN CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER IX. THE THIRD STAGE.

"I SEE, Dr. Hesselius, that you don't lose one word of my statement. I need not ask you to listen specially to what I am now going to tell you. They talk of the optic nerves, and of spectral illusions, as if the organ of sight was the only point assailable by the influences that have fastened upon me—I know better. For two years in my direful case that limitation prevailed. But as food is taken in softly at the lips, and then brought under the teeth, as the tip of the little finger caught in a mill-crank will draw in the hand, and the arm, and the whole body, so the miserable mortal who has been once caught firmly by the end of the finest fibre of his nerve, is drawn in and in, by the enormous machinery of hell, until he is as I am. Yes, doctor, as I am, for while I talk to you, and implore relief, I feel that my prayer is for the impossible, and my pleading with the inexorable."

I endeavoured to calm his visibly increasing agitation, and told him that he must not despair.

While we talked the night had overtaken us. The filmy moonlight was wide over the scene which the window commanded, and I said:

"Perhaps you would prefer having candles. This light, you know, is odd. I should wish you, as much as possible, under your usual conditions while I make my diagnosis, shall I call it—otherwise I don't care."

"All lights are the same to me," he said: "except when I read or write, I care not if night were perpetual. I am going to tell you what happened about a year ago. The thing began to speak to me."

"Speak! How do you mean—speak as a man does, do you mean?"

"Yes; speak in words and consecutive sentences, with perfect coherence and articulation; but there is a peculiarity. It is not like the tone of a human voice. It is not by my ears it reaches me—it comes like a singing through my head.

"This faculty, the power of speaking to me, will be my undoing. It won't let me pray, it interrupts me with dreadful blasphemies. I dare not go on, I could not. Oh! doctor, can the skill, and thought, and prayers of man avail me nothing!"

"You must promise me, my dear sir, not to trouble yourself with unnecessarily exciting thoughts; confine yourself strictly to the narrative of *facts*; and recollect, above all, that even if the thing that infests you be as you seem to suppose, a reality with an actual independent life and will, yet it can have no power to hurt you, unless it be given from above: its access to your senses depends mainly upon your physical condition—this is, under God, your comfort and reliance: we are all alike environed. It is only that in your case, the 'paries,' the veil of the flesh, the screen, is a little out of repair, and sights and sounds are transmitted. We must enter on a new course, sir—be encouraged. I'll give to-night to the careful consideration of the whole case."

"You are very good, sir; you think it worth trying, you don't give me quite up; but, sir, you don't know, it is gaining such an influence over me: it orders me about, it is such a tyrant, and I'm growing so helpless. May God deliver me!"

"It orders you about—of course you mean by speech?"

"Yes, yes; it is always urging me to crimes, to injure others, or myself. You see, doctor, the situation is urgent, it is indeed. When I was in Shropshire, a few weeks ago" (Mr. Jennings was speaking rapidly and trembling now, holding my arm with one hand, and looking in my face), "I went out one day with a party of friends for a walk: my persecutor, I tell you, was with me at the time. I lagged behind the rest: the country near the Dee, you know, is beautiful. Our path happened to lie near a coal mine, and at the verge of the wood is a perpendicular shaft, they say, a hundred and fifty feet deep. My niece had remained behind with me—she knows, of course, nothing of the nature of my sufferings. She knew, however, that I had been ill, and was low, and she remained to

prevent my being quite alone. As we loitered slowly on together the brute that accompanied me was urging me to throw myself down the shaft. I tell you now—oh, sir, think of it!—the one consideration that saved me from that hideous death was the fear lest the shock of witnessing the occurrence should be too much for the poor girl. I asked her to go on and take her walk with her friends, saying that I could go no further. She made excuses, and the more I urged her the firmer she became. She looked doubtful and frightened. I suppose there was something in my looks or manner that alarmed her; but she would not go, and that literally saved me. You had no idea, sir, that a living man could be made so abject a slave of Satan," he said, with a ghastly groan and a shudder.

There was a pause here, and I said, "You were preserved nevertheless. It was the act of God. You are in his hands and in the power of no other being: be therefore confident for the future."

CHAPTER X. HOME.

I MADE him have candles lighted, and saw the room looking cheery and inhabited before I left him. I told him that he must regard his illness strictly as one dependent on physical, though *subtle* physical, causes. I told him that he had evidence of God's care and love in the deliverance which he had just described, and that I had perceived with pain that he seemed to regard its peculiar features as indicating that he had been delivered over to spiritual reprobation. Than such a conclusion nothing could be, I insisted, less warranted; and not only so, but more contrary to facts, as disclosed in his mysterious deliverance from that murderous influence during his Shropshire excursion. First, his niece had been retained by his side without his intending to keep her near him; and, secondly, there had been infused into his mind an irresistible repugnance to execute the dreadful suggestion in her presence.

As I reasoned this point with him, Mr. Jennings wept. He seemed comforted. One promise I exacted, which was that should the monkey at any time return, I should be sent for immediately; and, repeating my assurance that I would give neither time nor thought to any other subject until I had thoroughly investigated his case, and that to-morrow he should hear the result, I took my leave.

Before getting into the carriage I told

the servant that his master was far from well, and that he should make a point of frequently looking into his room.

My own arrangements I made with a view to being quite secure from interruption.

I merely called at my lodgings, and, with a travelling-desk and carpet-bag, set off in a hackney-carriage for an inn about two miles out of town, called The Horns, a very quiet and comfortable house, with good thick walls. And there I resolved, without the possibility of intrusion or distraction, to devote some hours of the night, in my comfortable sitting-room, to Mr. Jennings's case, and so much of the morning as it might require.

(There occurs here a careful note of Dr. Hesselius's opinion upon the case, and of the habits, dietary, and medicines which he prescribed. It is curious—some people would say mystical. But on the whole I doubt whether it would sufficiently interest a reader of the kind I am likely to meet with to warrant its being here reprinted. This whole letter was plainly written at the inn in which he had hid himself for the occasion. The next letter is dated from his town lodgings.)

I left town for the inn where I slept last night at half-past nine, and did not arrive at my room in town until one o'clock this afternoon. I found a letter in Mr. Jennings's hand upon my table. It had not come by post, and on inquiry, I learned that Mr. Jennings's servant had brought it, and on learning that I was not to return until to-day, and that no one could tell him my address, he seemed very uncomfortable, and said that his orders from his master were that he was not to return without an answer.

I opened the letter, and read :

"Dear Dr. Hesselius. It is here. You had not been an hour gone when it returned. It is speaking. It knows all that has happened. It knows everything—it knows you, and is frantic and atrocious. It reviles. I send you this. It knows every word I have written—I write. This I promised, and I therefore write, but I fear very confused, very incoherently. I am so interrupted, disturbed.

"Ever yours, sincerely yours,

"ROBERT LYNDER JENNINGS."

"When did this come?" I asked.

"About eleven last night; the man was here again, and has been here three times

to-day. The last time is about an hour since."

Thus answered, and with the notes I had made upon his case in my pocket, I was, in a few minutes, driving out to Richmond, to see Mr. Jennings.

I by no means, as you perceive, despaired of Mr. Jennings's case. He had himself remembered and applied, though quite in a mistaken way, the principle which I lay down in my *Metaphysical Medicine*, and which governs all such cases. I was about to apply it in earnest. I was profoundly interested, and very anxious to see and examine him while the "enemy" was actually present.

I drove up to the sombre house, and ran up the steps, and knocked. The door, in a little time, was opened by a tall woman in black silk. She looked ill, and as if she had been crying. She curtsied, and heard my question, but she did not answer. She turned her face away, extending her hand hurriedly towards two men who were coming down-stairs; and thus having, as it were, tacitly made me over to them, she passed through a side-door hastily and shut it.

The man who was nearest the hall, I at once accosted, but being now close to him, I was shocked to see that both his hands were covered with blood.

I drew back a little, and the man passing down-stairs merely said in a low tone. "Here's the servant, sir."

The servant had stopped on the stairs, confounded and dumb at seeing me. He was rubbing his hands in a handkerchief, and it was steeped in blood.

"Jones, what is it, what has happened?" I asked, while a sickening suspicion overpowered me.

The man asked me to come up to the lobby. I was beside him in a moment, and frowning and pallid, with contracted eyes, he told me the horror which I already half-guessed.

His master had made away with himself.

I went up-stairs with him to the room—what I saw there I won't tell you. He had cut his throat with his razor. It was a frightful gash. The two men had laid him upon the bed and composed his limbs. It had happened, as the immense pool of blood on the floor declared, at some distance between the bed and the window. There was carpet round his bed, and a carpet under his dressing-table, but none on the rest of the floor, for the man said he did not like carpet on his bedroom. In this sombre

and now terrible room, one of the great elms that darkened the house was slowly moving the shadow of one of its great boughs upon this dreadful floor.

I beckoned to the servant and we went down-stairs together. I turned, off the hall, into an old-fashioned panelled room, and there standing, I heard all the servant had to tell. It was not a great deal.

"I concluded, sir, from your words, and looks, sir, as you left last night, that you thought my master seriously ill. I thought it might be that you were afraid of a fit, or something. So I attended very close to your directions. He sat up late, till past three o'clock. He was not writing or reading. He was talking a great deal to himself, but that was nothing unusual. At about that hour I assisted him to undress, and left him in his slippers and dressing-gown. I went back softly in about half an hour. He was in his bed, quite undressed, and a pair of candles lighted on the table beside his bed. He was leaning on his elbow and looking out at the other side of the bed when I came in. I asked him if he wanted anything, and he said no.

"I don't know whether it was what you said to me, sir, or something a little unusual about him, but I was uneasy, uncommon uneasy, about him last night.

"In another half hour, or it might be a little more, I went up again. I did not hear him talking as before. I opened the door a little. The candles were both out, which was not usual. I had a bedroom candle, and I let the light in, a little bit, looking softly round. I saw him sitting in that chair beside the dressing-table with his clothes on again. He turned round and looked at me. I thought it strange he should get up and dress, and put out the candles to sit in the dark, that way. But I only asked him again if I could do anything for him. He said, no, rather sharp, I thought. I asked if I might light the candles, and he said, 'Do as you like, Jones.' So I lighted them, and I lingered a little about the room, and he said, 'Tell me truth, Jones, why did you come again—you did not hear any one cursing?' 'No, sir,' I said, wondering what he could mean.

"'No,' said he, after me, 'of course, no;' and I said to him, 'Wouldn't it be well, sir, you went to bed? It's just five o'clock;' and he said nothing but, 'Very likely: good-night, Jones.' So I went, sir, but in less than an hour I came again. The door was fast, and he heard me, and called as I thought from the bed to know what I

wanted, and he desired me not to disturb him again. I lay down and slept for a little. It must have been between six and seven when I went up again. The door was still fast, and he made no answer, so I did not like to disturb him, and thinking he was asleep, I left him till nine. It was his custom to ring when he wished me to come, and I had no particular hour for calling him. I tapped very gently, and getting no answer, I stayed away a good while, supposing he was getting some rest then. It was not till eleven o'clock I grew really uncomfortable about him—for at the latest he was never, that I could remember, later than half-past ten. I got no answer. I knocked and called, and still no answer. So not being able to force the door, I called Thomas from the stables, and together we forced it, and found him in the shocking way you saw."

Jones had no more to tell. Poor Mr. Jennings was very gentle, and very kind. All his people were fond of him. I could see that the servant was very much moved.

So, dejected and agitated, I passed from that terrible house, and its dark canopy of elms, and I hope I shall never see it more. While I write to you I feel like a man who has but half waked from a frightful and monotonous dream. My memory rejects the picture with incredulity and horror. Yet I know it is true. It is the story of the process of a poison, a poison which excites the reciprocal action of spirit and nerve, and paralyses the tissue that separates those cognate functions of the senses, the external and the interior. Thus we find strange bed-fellows, and the mortal and immortal prematurely make acquaintance.

CONCLUSION. A WORD FOR THOSE WHO SUFFER.

My dear Van L., you have suffered from an affection similar to that which I have just described. You twice complained of a return of it.

Who, under God, cured you? Your humble servant, Martin Hesselius. Let me rather adopt the more emphasised piety of a certain good old French surgeon of three hundred years ago: "I treated, and God cured you."

Come, my friend, you are not to be hippish. Let me tell you a fact.

I have met with, and treated, as my book shows, fifty-seven cases of this kind of vision, which I term indifferently "sublimated," "precocious," and "interior."

There is another class of affections which

are truly termed—though commonly confounded with those which I describe—spectral illusions. These latter I look upon as being no less simply curable than a cold in the head or a trifling dyspepsia.

It is those which rank in the first category that test our promptitude of thought. Fifty-seven such cases have I encountered, neither more nor less. And in how many of these have I failed? In no one single instance.

There is no one affliction of mortality more easily and certainly reducible, with a little patience, and a rational confidence in the physician. With these simple conditions, I look upon the cure as absolutely certain.

You are to remember that I had not even commenced to treat Mr. Jennings's case. I have not any doubt that I should have cured him perfectly in eighteen months, or possibly it might have extended to two years. Some cases are very rapidly curable, others extremely tedious. Every intelligent physician who will give thought and diligence to the task, will effect a cure.

You know my tract on *The Cardinal Functions of the Brain*. I there, by the evidence of innumerable facts, prove, as I think, the high probability of a circulation arterial and venous in its mechanism, through the nerves. Of this system, thus considered, the brain is the heart. The fluid, which is propagated hence through one class of nerves, returns in an altered state through another, and the nature of that fluid is spiritual, though not immaterial, any more than, as I before remarked, light or electricity are so.

By various abuses, among which the habitual use of such agents as green tea is one, this fluid may be affected as to its quality, but it is more frequently disturbed as to equilibrium. This fluid being that which we have in common with spirits, a congestion found upon the masses of brain or nerve, connected with the interior sense, forms a surface unduly exposed, on which disembodied spirits may operate: communication is thus more or less effectually established. Between this brain circulation and the heart circulation there is an intimate sympathy. The seat, or rather the instrument of exterior vision, is the eye. The seat of interior vision is the nervous

tissue and brain, immediately about and above the eyebrow. You remember how effectually I dissipated your pictures by the simple application of iced eau-de-cologne. Few cases, however, can be treated exactly alike with anything like rapid success. Cold acts powerfully as a repellant of the nervous fluid. Long enough continued it will even produce that permanent insensibility which we call numbness, and a little longer, muscular as well as sensational paralysis.

I have not, I repeat, the slightest doubt that I should have first dimmed and ultimately sealed that inner eye which Mr. Jennings had inadvertently opened. The same senses are opened in delirium tremens, and entirely shut up again when the overaction of the cerebral heart, and the prodigious nervous congestions that attend it, are terminated by a decided change in the state of the body. It is by acting steadily upon the body, by a simple process, that this result is produced—and inevitably produced—I have never yet failed.

Poor Mr. Jennings made away with himself. But that catastrophe was the result of a totally different malady, which, as it were, projected itself upon that disease which was established. His case was in the distinctive manner a complication, and the complaint under which he really succumbed, was hereditary suicidal mania. Poor Mr. Jennings I cannot call a patient of mine, for I had not even begun to treat his case, and he had not yet given me, I am convinced, his full and unreserved confidence. If the patient do not array himself on the side of the disease, his cure is certain.

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VERONICA.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE."
IN FIVE BOOKS.

BOOK III.

CHAPTER V. A SHADOW ACROSS THE SUNSHINE.

THE summer passed away monotonously at Villa Chiari. The heat increased steadily, reached a climax, and then began as steadily to abate. All through the blazing months Sir John remained at the villa. The house basked in the glare of the long day with closed blinds, like a living thing asleep in the sunshine. Then, towards evening, doors and windows were thrown open, and figures were seen seated beneath the loggia, or pacing the shadiest garden walks, and the sound of footsteps echoed on the flagged courtyard.

As the days and weeks and months went by, and brought no tidings from Maud or the vicar, Veronica grew restlessly discontented. For some time anger supported her spirits. But by degrees she became tormented by apprehensions for her father's health. The apprehensions were only momentary, but they returned oftener and oftener. She debated the possibility that none of her letters had been received, and twisted the matter this way and that way in her mind.

Once she spoke to Sir John on the subject.

It was after a fit of depression and tears, and she was unable to suffer alone. She felt impelled to make him share her pain.

"I do wonder how papa is!" she said, unexpectedly, as they were sitting alone together in the twilight.

Sir John made no answer, but turned uneasily in his chair.

"I do wonder. I want to know. I *must* know!"

"What is the meaning of this sudden anxiety?"

"It is not sudden. Because I have kept it to myself so long, you cannot understand that I have been suffering all this time!"

Veronica really thought for the moment that she had been generously sparing him. She knew herself to have been unhappy at intervals, and omitted to observe that the first moment she had felt the desire to speak of her unhappiness to Sir John, she had yielded to it without a thought of restraining herself for his sake.

"Well, what can I do? Can I help it if they take no notice of you? Besides, what is there to be anxious about? No news is good news."

"I wrote to Maud. I did think *she* would have answered me!"

"Bah! You are infatuated with that girl. I wonder that a person of your intellect should be so taken in by her missish airs."

"You know nothing about Maud," cried Veronica, quickly. "You cannot understand her one bit."

"Neither, it seems, can you," retorted Sir John. Praise of Maud always displeased him. Veronica's reverence and admiration for her, irritated him peculiarly.

Veronica started up with a little childish exclamation of impatience, and walked to the window.

"I *must* know how papa is!" she said. Her voice was changed now. There were certain deep tones in it which the mention of Maud alone called forth.

Her pettishness disturbed Sir John much less than her earnestness.

"Amor mio," he said, soothingly, "rest assured that if any evil had happened to

your father, or if any evil threatened him even, you would not fail to hear of it. There are plenty of kind, pious people in that Arcadian village who would cheerfully take on themselves the duty of imparting anything disagreeable."

She was willing to be put on good terms with herself at anybody's expense—save Maud's—and she smiled contemptuously at the recollection of the Shipley people.

"Can't you fancy their gloating over such a chance of punishing you for having had the courage to escape from among them?"

"Il Principe Cesare de' Barletti," announced a servant at this moment, and the tête-à-tête interview was at an end.

The prince was a constant, and nearly the only, visitor at Villa Chiari throughout the summer. One or two other men came occasionally; a stray attaché, left behind in solitary responsibility during the absence of his chief, and bewailing his fate; a belated Prussian grandee, passing through on his way from the sea-baths at Leghorn to the northern side of the Alps. No English came, and no ladies.

Early in September people began to return to Florence. Veronica made various indirect attempts to see and to be seen by such of the fashionable world as were already to be found driving in the Cascine towards the sunset hour, and inhaling the evening miasma heroically. But Sir John opposed her desire in this particular. And had it not been for a hope which never abandoned her altogether (though it flickered low at times), and for Prince Cesare de' Barletti, she would, she told herself, have found the ennui of her secluded life intolerable.

Sir John encouraged Barletti to come. If he had not desired Barletti's presence at the villa, Sir John would unquestionably have been restrained by no delicacy from making his sentiments manifest.

There were several causes which made Sir John willing to receive Barletti. The first was, that the Neapolitan amused him, played picquet fairly well (in truth, he could play much better than his host, but had tact and temper enough never to hint at the fact), and brought up from the city little gossiping stories which Sir John relished. The second was, that Veronica was either pleasantly gay and good-tempered under the excitement of the stranger's presence, or, if she were otherwise, vented the haughty self-asserting humour of the hour on Barletti, whom she treated at times with

absolute insolence. Both these moods of hers were agreeable to Sir John: the latter especially so. Then there was the circumstance that Barletti, with all his poverty and pliancy, was undoubtedly the scion of an illustrious race. Now, Sir John was not the scion of an illustrious race. He would not have openly admitted the fact, but he knew it. And it was ineffably soothing to any irritating doubts which he might occasionally entertain as to his own importance in the world, and as to the supremacy of wealth, to contemplate a penniless prince flattering him for a dinner.

As we are all apt to believe what we wish, Sir John rather over-estimated the attractions of his dinners, and the impression that his riches made on Barletti.

Early in October Sir John announced his intention of going to Naples for the winter. Veronica was genuinely delighted at the news. But, with a petty perversity which she sometimes indulged in towards Sir John, she received it very coldly. He had made her summer pass in inexpressible boredom; and she was resolved not to gratify him by any too great readiness to be amused, the moment it suited him to amuse her.

"We shall be able to have a little gaiety and society in Naples," said Sir John. "You deserve some compensation, poverina, for the dulness of the summer."

This provoked Veronica, and she answered without deigning to turn her eyes towards him: "I doubt the power of Naples to give me compensation."

Sir John happened to be in a good temper. His dinner had been varied, savoury, and digestible—three conditions not often combined—and he humoured her with an exasperating ostentation of forbearance.

"Méchante! Did you in truth find the summer spent alone with me so dull?"

"Very!"

"Ha! I wonder, then, that you do not show more pleasure at the prospect of a change."

"I see no prospect of a change."

The words were barely uttered before she repented them. Sir John's good temper, too roughly strained, had snapped. It was at all times brittle and untrustworthy.

He growled out an inarticulate oath. It was not the first she had heard from his lips addressed to herself.

"What a fool I am!" she thought; "I never take advantage of his good moods. Oh, if I could but command myself!"

The truth was that his "good moods" were almost the only moments in which she was not afraid of him. And the moments in which she was not afraid of him tempted her to revenge herself for her subjection at most other times. There were other moments when, being roused to passionate anger, she lost fear and prudence. But such moments were still rare in her intercourse with the man whom she had made the master of her fate.

She came and knelt beside him, resting her hand on his as it hung over the cushioned arm of his chair.

"What will you do for me at Naples?" she asked, coaxingly.

He was about to answer: not, as it seemed by his frowning brow and sneering smile, very graciously: when his face changed, he made a strange inarticulate sound, and leaned back gasping in his chair.

Veronica flew to the bell to summon assistance, then she bathed his forehead with some perfume from a bottle that stood near at hand, and fanned him with her handkerchief.

"What is it? What is the matter?" she kept asking wildly. She reiterated her questions when Paul came into the room.

Paul wasted no time in reassuring her. With a swiftness very surprising and unexpected in one whose movements were habitually so deliberate, he loosened his master's cravat. Then he ran to Sir John's bedroom and returned with a travelling flask, from which he poured a few drops of brandy down his master's throat.

When he had done so, he answered Veronica as calmly as though she had that instant put some ordinary question to him.

"A faintness, miladi. He will be better now. It is passing."

Veronica stood by, scared and trembling. Paul fetched some cold water, and threw it sharply on his master's cheeks and forehead.

"Shall I not call some of the other servants?" said Veronica, clasping and unclasping her hands nervously. "Some one must be sent for a doctor."

"Better not, just yet. We shall hear what he says. He is coming to himself."

Sir John did revive. Some semblance of life returned to his face, which had grown strangely livid.

His eyes fell on Veronica, and he turned them away with a look of impatience.

"What is it?" she cried, bending over him. "Can you not speak to me?"

Sir John feebly tried to raise his hand-

kerchief to his mouth, and failed. He looked appealingly at Paul, who immediately wiped the water from his master's face, in a steady matter-of-course way. Still Sir John did not speak.

Paul watched him intently; and at last said to Veronica: "You had better go away, miladi. I shall call Ansano by-and-bye, and help Sir John to his room. He will lie down and repose for an hour or so. And then he will be quite well again. The heat made him faint."

During this speech Paul kept his eyes fixed on his master's face, and seemed to read in it approval and confirmation of his words: for he added almost instantly: "Yes, yes; that is it. The heat made him faint. It is nothing; and you had better go away, miladi."

Veronica obeyed in bewilderment. She was glad to escape from the room; and yet she somewhat resented being sent away.

She was walking quickly along the corridor that led to her own room, when she heard a voice close behind her: "Miladi!"

Her heart leapt at the suddenness of the sound, and she turned round in terror. It was Paul.

"Pardon, miladi. I fear I startled you. The matting is so soft, it deadens footsteps. I only wanted to say that Sir John much wishes that the other domestics should not be told of his little indisposition. He dislikes a fuss, he says, miladi."

"Oh he has spoken to you, then! How is he?"

"Sir John is much better, miladi. The heat made him faint. It is nothing."

Veronica sat down in her boudoir, and tried to think steadily of what had just happened. She did not believe that it had been a mere fainting fit. There had been a strange look in Sir John's face, unlike anything she had ever seen before. Was he very ill? Was he going to die?

She rose and moved restlessly about the room. Then she stopped suddenly, and reflected that Paul had shown no apprehension. Paul had even recommended that no doctor should be sent for. Paul knew Sir John well. He *must* know whether there were danger or not!

If—oh, if Sir John were going to die!

Her knees shook under her, and she threw herself on to a sofa. She lay there, stretched at full length, with her face buried in the cushions; her hair pushed aside, and her hands covering her ears, as though to shut out some terrible sound, for a long time.

Once the shutting of a heavy door echoed through the house, and for many minutes after the last reverberation had died away, her heart beat with dreadful rapidity, and she waited in the tremor of suspense and fear, expecting to be summoned by Paul's voice. No one came. The afternoon was waning, and at last she heard one of the women-servants singing a Tuscan love-song, as she moved about the house at her work. That was a reassuring sound. Veronica sat up feeling dizzy and half-blind as she faced the light. There were no tears on her face, but it was deadly pale, except one crimson streak, where she had pressed her cheek against the cushion. Her first act was to lock the door which communicated with the corridor. There was another door in the boudoir leading to her bedchamber, to which there was no other access. Then she went to the looking-glass and contemplated herself.

"What a ghost I look!" she thought, "and how I have been tormenting myself! And perhaps for nothing, after all!"

She hesitated a moment, but finally took a book from the table, unlocked the door of the boudoir, rang the bell, and returned to the sofa.

"Miladi rang?" said her maid, coming to the door. Veronica had taught all the servants to give her that title.

"Yes. What o'clock is it? I shall not dress for dinner. I fell asleep over my book, and have made my head ache. Get me some eau-de-cologne. Put on my peignoir, and shut out that glare. How red the sunset is! You must brush my hair in the dark as well as you can. I cannot bear the light."

It was not dark when the maid had closed the persiennes, but it was dim. Veronica's white wrapper gleamed in the twilight. The maid stood patiently brushing out her mistress's thick tresses in silence.

"Did you ever faint, Beppina?" asked her mistress.

"Faint? No, miladi."

"You have seen people in fainting fits perhaps?"

"Yes; I saw a girl once, who was in a dead swoon."

"There is no danger in them, of course?"

"Who knows!" answered Beppina, with an expressive shrug.

"What made the girl you saw faint?"

"Hunger, miladi."

"Hunger!"

"Yes. Her damo* had been a Gari-

* Sweetheart.

baldino, and he got wounded in the wars; and when he came back to Florence, weak and sickly, he could get no work, and his people were too poor to help him, so Giga—she was a dressmaker's apprentice—kept him, and gave him nearly all her food. And one day, when she was going to her work, she turned giddy, and fell down in the street, and they took her to a hospital, and the doctor said she had not had enough to eat; and that that was all that was the matter with her."

"How dreadful! It must be awful to be so poor!"

"Eh, che vuole? She couldn't have loved him more if she had been rich! And she saved his life, and that was a consolazione di Dio."

"Sir John's love, miladi, and will you excuse him from coming into the dining-room? He will have the honour of joining you in the evening afterwards."

Paul said these words from the boudoir, holding the door that communicated with the bed-room in his hand.

"How is Sir John?" asked Veronica in English.

"Sir John has reposed, miladi, and is quite well, only a little fatigued with the heat."

"I shall not come down to dinner. Tell them to serve it in the little blue room next my boudoir."

"Yes, miladi. Then I shall tell the signor principe that miladi does not receive this evening?"

Veronica was emboldened by the fact that, while Paul's face could be seen illumined by the setting sun, whose light streamed into the boudoir, her own face was in shadow. She had sometimes been vexed with herself for being in a kind of awe under Paul's grave glance, and for having allowed more than one caprice and manifestation of wilfulness to be checked by its silent influence. Now she resolved to consult her own will and pleasure, and she threw a little superfluous asperity into the voice in which she answered:

"No; certainly not! I have given you no such directions."

"Miladi wishes to have the dinner served for two in the blue room?"

"Yes.—No! I will dine in the dining-saloon, and—is the prince here?"

"The signor principe is under the west loggia, smoking a cigar."

"Have you mentioned to him that Sir John was—was not well?"

"Sir John does not choose me to say so, miladi."

"That will do. You will have a cover laid for the prince. I shall try to persuade him to stay to amuse and cheer Sir John a little this evening."

After all she had not succeeded in simply issuing her commands without apology or explanation to Paul.

The latter bowed and withdrew.

Veronica waited until his footsteps had died away in the corridor; then she said, putting her hand to her forehead with the gesture of one struck with a sudden remembrance: "Oh, I forgot to give Paul a message for Sir John!"

"Shall I go, *miladi*?" asked Beppina.

"No, never mind. I will go myself. Give me a lace scarf, or something to wrap over my head. That will do. Lay out a dinner dress—anything light and cool. I shall return in a few minutes."

Veronica passed through her boudoir and descended the staircase leading to Sir John's apartments, which were on the ground floor. Arrived at the basement story, however, she entered one of the long suite of reception-rooms which occupied the whole west side of the villa; opened a glass door; and stepped out into the loggia. Cesare de' Barletti was smoking in the loggia, as Paul had said. As soon as he perceived Veronica, he threw away his cigar and advanced towards her, hat in hand.

AS THE CROW FLIES.

DUE NORTH. SCARBOROUGH AND WHITBY.

THE crow, with a clear look-out over the German Ocean, and with the Dogger Bank and the coast of Jutland out there yonder, although invisible even to his keen, black, restless eyes, turns from the sea to look down with placid approbation on pleasant, breezy, briny, wave-washed Scarborough. It was a small and humble cluster of the huts of Yorkshire fishermen in the old times before one of Stephen's barons, William le Gros, Earl of Albemarle and Holderness, built the grand castle, whose shattered tower still challenges old Time from its stately cliff. Yet it was not so humble but that it had its stormy days in the Danish wars, and more especially when that fierce rebel Tosti, the son of the great Earl Godwin, and a brother of Harold (urged on by William of Normandy, who had already a shrewd eye on our white cliffs, and by Baldwin, Earl of Flanders), landed in Yorkshire a second time (after being once driven back to his ships by the watchful Earls of Northumberland and Chester), and, burning, robbing,

and slaying, came reeking with blood to little Scarborough. The legend is that the Norwegians, greedy for slaughter, piled great masses of timber on the hill where the ruins of the castle now stand, and, having set the beams in one great crimson drift of raging flame, stuck pitchforks into the burning wood and hurled it down upon the roofs and into the narrow streets of the town, which was soon wrapped in fire. But a little later Scarborough had its revenge, for Harold and sixty thousand Saxons met truculent Tosti and the Norwegians at Stamford Bridge, and, after ten hours' fighting Harold slew his rebellious brother and the rash Norwegian king, and twenty shattered ships sufficed to carry back the remnants of the army that five hundred ships had brought.

In Edward the Second's reign, Scarborough had again its hour of romance. The foolish, wild young king had been reveling at York with his Gascon favourite, Gaveston, who daily grew more insolent and rapacious. The indignant barons, who hated the insolent foreigner, headed by Henry the Third's grandson, the Earl of Lancaster, Lincoln, Leicester, Salisbury, and Derby, besieged Gaveston in Scarborough, where the king had placed him for safety, making him governor of that eagle's nest of a castle. Gaveston repulsed bravely several attacks, but the provisions in the town falling short, and his communication with the king at York being intercepted, he surrendered to the "Black Dog," as the Earl of Lancaster was called by his enemies, on conditions, if negotiations failed, that he should be restored safe to Scarborough. But from Doddington Castle, near Bunbury, he was hurried to Warwick, and from there taken to Blacklow Hill (on Gaversley Heath) and there beheaded. The king, inconsolable at the death of his favourite, had the body interred at a new church at Langley, and with his own hands spread two cloth-of-gold palls upon his tomb. This execution of the young French vaurien took place just two years before the battle of Bannockburn.

Scarborough also had its adventures during the Wyatt rebellion, when the approaching Spanish marriage of Queen Mary was fevering the brains of all aggressive Protestants. Mr. Thomas Stafford, second son of Lord Stafford, and a hot-headed adherent of Wyatt, collected some English fugitives in France and returned with them to Scarborough. On a market-day he, and thirty of his men dressed as carters

and countrymen, and secretly armed, strolled up the hill into Scarborough Castle, and began staring about, as excursionists do, at the different towers and gates. At a given signal rushing on the sentinels, they secured them, and admitted their expectant companions. Poor gallant lad! The success was useless. Sir Thomas Wyatt had been already defeated at Hyde Park Corner, and at Temple Bar had thrown away his sword. After holding Scarborough Castle for three days of triumph only, Stafford surrendered it to the Earl of Westmoreland. The young nobleman, Captain Saunders, and three of their associates, Shelley, Bradford, and Proctor, were sent to the Tower. Stafford was beheaded, the rest hanged and quartered, and this was the origin of the old saying, "A Scarborough warning—a word and a blow, and the blow first."

It was in April, 1642, that from the battlements of the Beverley Gate at Hull, Sir John Hotham refused the king admittance, and by that refusal commenced the civil wars. It was not till February, 1644, that the storm fell upon Scarborough. The watchful Parliament sent Sir John Meldrum to succeed a general whom Fairfax had appointed, and the steel head-pieces mustering to the chanting of a sullen psalm, the men in grey and buff stormed the town at a rush, and carried St. Mary's Church on the hill by assault, driving Sir Hugh Cholmley, the Cavalier governor, into the castle. It was a great victory for the men of the sword and the Bible, for they took in the town and the fortress-church thirty-two pieces of cannon, with a great quantity of arms and ammunition, and in the harbour one hundred and twenty ships laden with wheat and timber surrendered to their blue flag. Sir John Meldrum then regularly invested the castle, which still tormented the sea, sands, town, and harbour with its plunging fire, and fixing guns in the east window of St. Mary's, opened a battery on the stubborn fortress. The garrison replied quite as hot and fast, and the Cavaliers' incessant and close fire soon demolished the choir of St. Mary's, the grey old ruins of which still mark the site. It was a tedious siege, and on the 17th of May, 1645, the Puritans, weary at the delay, made a general assault of the chief gate, but they were repulsed, many of their best officers killed, and their commander, Sir John Meldrum himself, mortally wounded. Sir Mathew Boynton, the new general, brought reinforcements and pressed the

siege with great vigour; still it was not till July, 1645, that brave Sir Hugh Cholmley surrendered. Twelve months' battering had made the inner towers, the barbican, even the square Norman keep itself begin to flake and crumble; the stores were all but gone; fatigue, sickness, and above all, scurvy, had worn out the garrison. The pale and miserable survivors had to be carried out in sheets, and nearly all required support. During this staunch siege the Cavaliers struck square silver crowns and half-crowns, some of which still exist. In old times there were only four churches in Scarborough; St. Nicholas on the cliff; St. Sepulchre's; St. Thomas in Newborough, which was destroyed by the fire of the castle-guns; and St. Mary's, the central tower of which (shaken during the siege) fell in 1659.

The Spa at Scarborough has a legend or two of its own. It was discovered in the reign of James the First by Mrs. Farrow, a sensible and quick-sighted observer. She had observed that the waters of a spring at the foot of the south cliff turned the stones, over which they trickled, a rusty red. Tasting the waters and finding them peculiar, and discovering also that they became tinged with purple when mixed with gall, she began to make further experiments to ascertain if they possessed medical properties. The Spa's value soon became acknowledged by the citizens of York and the gentry of the three Ridings. In 1698 a cistern was first made to collect the Spa waters. In December, 1737, a slight earthquake (as it was supposed by the curious) caused a very extraordinary change in the Spa spring. The "straith," a stone breakwater bound with timber, to protect the Spa House from the waves, suddenly gave way, and a mass of the cliff, containing nearly an acre of pasture land and with cattle grazing upon it at the very time, sank perpendicularly several yards. At the same time, the sand under the cliff for a hundred yards long rose six or seven feet.

Many old historical legends of piratical forays and daring revenges still hang about Scarborough. The crow has his little eye on one legend of the early part of the luckless reign of Richard the Second. A Scottish sea chief, named Andrew Mercer, being taken by northern ships, was clapped in prison in windy Scarborough Castle. The son of Mercer, furious at this, sailed angrily into the Yorkshire harbour with a little band of Scottish, French, and Spanish ships, and

carried off several vessels. Eager for revenge, and naturally solicitous for the safety of our seas, Aldorman Philpot, a rich London merchant, at once patriotically equipped an armed fleet at his own expense, darted out after Mercer, overtook him, retook the Scarborough ships, and, in addition, fifteen richly-laden Spanish vessels; so virtue was not merely its own reward in Philpot's case. Yorkshire ballads, which seem to centre round that brave and generous chief, Robin Hood, have apparently mixed up some story of him with this exploit of this sturdy alderman. The old ballad has it, that on a certain occasion (a long run of rheumatic wet weather, perhaps?), the outlaw of merry Sherwood, growing tired of the green-wood, resolved to go to Scarborough and turn fisherman. But Robin, quite out of his element at sea, and half his time squeamish and uncertain about the legs as a Margate yachting man, caught no fish. Suddenly, however, a French ship of war bears down on the little Betsy Jane; the master is in sore fear; but Robin's eye kindles, and his chest expands.

"Master, tie me to the mast," saith he,
 "That at my mark I may stand fair;
 And give me my bent bow in my hand,
 And never a Frenchman will I spare."

And so fast flew his grey-winged shafts, that the Frenchman's deck was soon strewn with dead men and the scuppers running blood. Then Robin and his merry men boarded the helpless vessel, and found in her, to their infinite delight,

Twelve thousand pound of money bright.

Many legends of Robin indeed prevail in this part of Yorkshire, for, not far off, near Whitby, is the bay still named after him, where tradition says, when hard pressed, he used to fly to the fishing vessels he kept there, and, putting to sea, escaped the fangs of the angry law. On the wild moors beyond Stoupe Brow, are some British or Saxon-Danish tumuli, where Robin and Little John are said to have practised their feats of archery. From the tower of Whitby Abbey it was that Robin and his tall lieutenant, after they had been entertained by Saint Hilda's monks, gave, at the request of their hosts, a proof of their skill with the "crooked stick and the grey goose wing." Their arrows (no doubt about it) fell nearly three miles off in the village of Hawsker, where (and this entirely clenches it) two upright stones still indicate where the shafts fell. When you have passed the din of the great, smoky Lowmoor ironworks, and left

Whitfield behind, you reach, a few miles further up the green valley of the Calder, Kirkstrees, where all true Yorkshiremen declare the great outlaw, when sore "distempered with cold and age," was treacherously bled to death by his ruthless aunt, an old prioress, who hated her brave nephew for the foul scorn he had always shown to priests. A small closet in the priory gate-house is still shown as the place where, when bleeding to death in the bolted den, the dying man bethought him of his bugle horn, and, staggering to the window, opened it, and

—blew out weak blasts three.
 Then Little John, when hearing him,
 As he sat under the tree,
 "I fear my master is near dead,
 He blows so wearily."

Then faithful Little John tightened his belt, flew to Kirkstrees, and breaking locks, bolts, &c., reached his master, and saw that he was dying. But Robin, gentle even under foul wrong, would not hear of Little John burning down Kirkstrees Hall and the treacherous nunnery. "No," said he, nobly,

"I never hurt fair maid in all my time,
 Nor at my end shall it be;
 But give me my bent bow in my hand,
 And a broad arrow I'll let flee,
 And where this arrow is taken up,
 There shall my grave digg'd be."

And so it was done, and on a spot of high table land, commanding a fine view of the sunny glades of Kirkstrees, there lies the bold outlaw. An iron railing among thick trees, encloses a block of stone, on which is engraved a sham antique inscription, dated 1247. It records the death of Robert Earl of Huntingdon, and concludes with these lines:

Such outlaws as he and his men
 Will England never see again.

In that genuine old classic ballad Robin Hood's Garland, a final verse runs:

Lay me a green sod under my head,
 And another at my feet,
 And lay my bent bow by my side,
 Which was my music sweet,
 And make my grave of gravel and green,
 Which is most right and meet.

Let me have length and breadth enough,
 With a green sod under my head,
 That they may say when I am dead,
 Here lies bold Robin Hood.

Yorkshire and the neighbouring counties are, indeed, full of relics and records of Robin. At Fountains Abbey they still show the well beside which he fought the sturdy Curtal friar. His chair, slipper, and cap used to be shown at St. Ann's Well, near Nottingham; there is a Robin Hood's Well at Skelbrook, near Doncaster; there is a Robin Hood's Hill above the vale of Castleton; and Robin Hood's Stride is shown

among the solitary rocks of Staunton Moor, in Derbyshire.

The antiquaries have fought hard over Little John's grave. One says he died in Scotland, another that he was hung near Dublin, while Mr. Hicklin, the last speaker, loudly asserts that he was buried at the picturesque village of Hathersage, in Derbyshire, where he was born, and where his cottage is still shown. His green cap used to be hung up in Hathersage church, but it is now removed to Carron Hill. There has been equal fighting as to where Robin Hood's birth took place. The oldest records say Lockesly Chase, near Sheffield (hence the name Sir Walter has given brave Robin in *Ivanhoe*). Others say the real Loxly was in Staffordshire or Warwickshire. Leland (Henry the Eighth) calls Robin a noble, and others boldly make him Robert Fitz-Odo, an Earl of Huntingdon outlawed in the twelfth century. Mr. Planché inclines to the opinion that he was a claimant at least of the earldom. After much controversy, it is almost certain that if Robin ever lived, he lived between 1160 and 1247, that is through the reigns of Henry the Second, Richard the First, John, and part of Henry the Third. Thierry, the French historian, has shown with much discrimination that in Richard Cœur de Lion's time Sherwood Forest stretched from Nottingham to the very centre of Yorkshire, and in these wilds bands of Saxon outlaws lived, who long defied and tormented the Norman.

RAIN AND RAIN-DOCTORS.

AN English newspaper published in the East has just told us that the Burmese pull a rope when they want rain. A capital idea: seeing that the pulling of a rope is within the competency of most of us. It is managed in Burmah thus: Two parties—those who wish for rain, and those who don't—lay hold of opposite ends of the rope; whichever pull hardest, win the day. It is said, however (as is the case in relation to many controversies and contests going on around us here at home), that the affair is prearranged; it is agreed beforehand that the rain-pullers shall be permitted to pull with more vigour than their competitors. Whether the rain comes when the rope has been pulled, our informant unfortunately has omitted to state.

There are rain-doctors in all countries: some further removed than others from

science, but doctors still. The looking out for omens (a habit more general than we are in the habit of supposing) is a residuum of a belief that was almost universal in old days. The signs or symptoms connected with the movements of animals may, in many instances, be worthy of attention; but they are mixed up with the strangest absurdities. Of the rain prognostics accepted two or three centuries ago, there was a pretty extensive variety. If ducks and drakes flutter their wings unusually when they rise; if young horses rub their backs against the ground; if sheep begin to bleat and skip about; if swine are seen to carry hay and straw to hiding-places; if oxen lick themselves the wrong way of the hair; if a lamp or candle sputter; if a great deal of soot falls down the chimney; if frogs croak more than usual; if swallows fly low; if hogs run home loudly grunting and squeaking; if cattle and donkeys prick up their ears; if ants come out of their hills, and moles and worms out of the ground; if crows assemble in crowds, and ravens croak; if water-fowl come to land; if (as an old writer describes it) "beastes move here and there, makynge a noyse, and brethyng up the ayre with open nostrils;" if the down fly off from the dandelion and the thistle when there is no wind; if church-bells be heard further than usual; in all such cases, we are told to expect rain. Gay, in his *Pastorals*, tells us that when a heifer sticks her tail bolt upright, or when our corns prick, it is an omen of approaching rain; whereas fine weather is foreshown by the high flying of swallows. In another of his works, *Trivia*, Gay says (in relation to the signboards which the streets of London so abundantly displayed in his day):

When the swinging signs your ears offend
With creaking noise, then rainy floods impend;
Soon shall the kennels swell with rapid streams.

Poor Robin's *Almanack*, about a century and a half ago, announced that when a hedgehog builds a nest with the opening in one direction, the next rain and wind will come from the opposite direction. Another writer asked:

Why doth a cow, about half an hour
Before there comes a hasty shower,
Clap her tail against a hedge?

The question is, does she? And the next question would be, is it one peculiarly-constituted cow who does so, or do cows generally so conduct themselves?

Rain-doctors and rain-prophets are two different classes. The latter wish to know

whence and when rain is coming, but with fair good sense lay aside any claim to the power of producing it. Not so the medicine-men of North America, who (if the exceedingly troublesome Red Man still retain his ancient characteristics) are looked to as potent influences in times of unwonted dry weather. Arabia can say something of the same kind. When Carsten Niebuhr was in that country, he stopped some time in the province of Nedjeram, which was under the rule of a sheikh named Mecrami. Of this sheikh, Niebuhr said: "He honours Mahomet as the prophet of God, but looks with little respect upon his successors and commentators. Some of the more sensible Arabs say that the sheikh has found means to avail himself of heaven even in this life; for (to use their expression) he sells Paradise by the yard, and assigns more or less favourable places in that mansion according to the sums paid him. Simple superstitious persons actually purchase assignments upon heaven from him and his procurators, and hope to profit thereby. A Persian of the province of Kerman, too, has lately begun to issue similar bills upon heaven, and has gained considerably by the traffic." Niebuhr dryly remarks upon this: "The people of the East appear to approach, daily, nearer to the ingenious inventions of Europeans in these matters." He then proceeds: "The knowledge of many secrets, and among others of one for obtaining rain when he pleases, is likewise ascribed to the sheikh. When the country suffers from drought, he appoints a fast, and after it a public procession, in which all must assist, with an air of humility, without their turbans, and in a garb suitably mean. Some Arabs of distinction assured me that this never fails to procure an immediate fall of rain."

We may, in imagination, leap over Egypt and sundry other hot regions, and pass from Arabia to Morocco, where Lempriere tells us of doings somewhat similar. (Not Lempriere the dictionary maker, but William Lempriere, an army-surgeon attached to the British garrison at Gibraltar.) The Emperor of Morocco, during the illness of his son and heir, applied through the English consul for the services of this gentleman; and Lempriere had opportunities thus afforded him of penetrating further into the recesses of domestic life than is often permitted in Mohammedan countries. Speaking of the harem at Morocco in 1790, he said: "In one of my visits I observed a procession, which upon inquiry I found was

intended as an invocation to God and Mahomet for rain, of which there had been a scarcity for several preceding months. The procession was commenced by the youngest children in the harem, who were barely able to walk, two abreast; and these were followed by the next in age, till at length a great part of the women fell into the group, making altogether upwards of a hundred persons. They carried on their heads their prayers written on paper, pasted on a square board, and proceeded through all the courts singing hymns, the purport of which was adapted to the solemn occasion. I was informed that they continued this ceremony every day during the whole of the dry weather, and were to repeat it till their prayers were attended with success."—A safe proceeding, at all events: seeing that the desired rain was sure to come sooner or later.

Whether any other people in the East besides the Burmese perform the rope-pulling mode of producing rain, we do not know; but the women in some parts of India adopt a peculiar method of their own. The Bengal Hurkaru, a newspaper published in Calcutta, had the following paragraph less than five years ago, in relation to a drought which affected a large portion of India: "The pundits and moulvies were called into the service, and muntras and beits (prayers) were read with intense but unavailing fervour. Finding the efforts of the priests fail them, the ryots (peasants) next had recourse to an ancient and somewhat singular custom. At night all the women of many of the villages walked naked to some neighbouring tank or stream, and there, with songs and invocations, sought to propitiate the offended heavens, and to induce the gods to send them rain. This device was also without immediate effect."

But, while the medicine-men and weather doctors are trying to bring rain where there is none, what are we to say of a semi, or demi-semi, scientific man who attempts to drive away rain when he doesn't want it, and make it fall somewhere else? One M. Otto, of Leipzig, has not only broached this problem, but has actually had his scheme brought before the Académie des Sciences at Paris. He proposes a machine called a pluvifuge, or rain-expeller, to be hoisted on a very elevated platform. The machine is to consist of an enormous pair of bellows worked by steam power; and its purpose is to blow away any rainy clouds which may be accumulating. If

many of these were placed at equal intervals in a large city, they might perchance insure a continuance of fair weather. What the learned Académie thought of this is not recorded; perhaps they preserved a polite silence; but a very knotty question presents itself. If (an enormous mouthful to swallow, in all conscience) the pluvifuge could really do this work, how about other localities? As dirty little boys when driven away by a policeman from one place, will certainly reassemble in another, so would the rain, driven away by the pluvifuge from one locality, make its presence sensibly felt in another. And suppose that other locality does not want it? It has been very cogently asked: "Would not an action for damages lie against the workers of the machine in town A, in case of towns B and C suffering from the undue quantity of rain which would be liable to fall to their share, if town A succeeded in puffing it all away from itself? For the vapour blown from some place must needs be blown to some other place. Or say that towns B and C, and even D and E, were as sharp-witted as town A, and were to set up equally efficacious machines, there surely ought to be some redress for town F, in case of its being altogether submerged, as might very possibly happen under such circumstances." A case is supposed of an open-air fête at Smithville, to celebrate the coming of age of the heir of the Smiths. At Brownsville a pluvifuge happens unluckily to be at work, and blows the rain to the very lawn at which the fête champêtre is being held. If a case, *Smith v. Brown*, were instituted, would not the plaintiff be entitled to damages for the injury done by the rain to the ladies' dresses, and for doctors' bills arising out of colds and catarrhs caught on the occasion?

Few of our modern weather-prophets know the real legend which gave birth to the belief in St. Swithin's Day, as a weather-wise day. As Bishop of Winchester, just about a thousand years ago, Swithin was a man noted for his worth and his humility. The latter was displayed in a request that, when dead, he should be buried not within the church but in the churchyard, where passers-by might tread upon his grave, and where roof-eaves might drip water upon it. His wish was complied with. But about a century afterwards, when Swithin had been canonised into St. Swithin, the clergy, in a fit of renewed zeal, thinking that the body of so great a saint ought not to lie in such a place, de-

termined to remove it into the cathedral; but rain poured down so continuously for forty days that they could not find a suitable opportunity for the grand ceremonial which had been planned. Accepting this as a judgment on them for disobeying the saint's wishes, they gave up their project, and built a chapel over the humble grave instead. An accomplished Anglo-Saxon scholar has recently played havoc with this old legend; but it would take many such scholars to beat out of the heads of uneducated people their faith in the 15th of July. The Astronomer Royal at Greenwich states that he finds, on an average of a large number of years, quite as much rain, after a fine St. Swithin's day as after one that is wet; but no matter, the old quatrain is quoted triumphantly against him:

St. Swithin's day, if thou dost rain,
For forty days it will remain;
St. Swithin's day, if thou be fair,
For forty days 'twill rain nae mair.

There are, sometimes, real showers of very unreal rain. It is stated by an old writer that in Lapland and Finmark about a century ago, mice of a particular kind were known to fall from the sky; and that such an event was sure to be followed by a good year for foxes. A shower of frogs fell near Toulouse in 1804. A prodigious number of black insects, about an inch in length, descended in a snow-storm at Pakroff, in Russia, in 1827. On one occasion, in Norway, the peasants were astonished at finding a shower of rats pelting down on their heads. Showers of fishes have been numerous. At Stanstead, in Kent, in 1666, a pasture field was found one morning covered plentifully with fish, although there is neither sea nor river, lake nor fish-pond near. At Allahabad, in 1839, an English officer saw a good smart down-pour of fish; and soon afterwards thousands of small dead fish were found upon the ground. Scotland has had many of these showers of fish; as in Ross-shire, in 1828, when quantities of herring-fry covered the ground; at Islay, in 1830, when a large number of herrings were found strewed over a field after a heavy gusty rain; at Wick, much more recently, when herrings were found in large quantities in a field half a mile from the beach. In all these, and numerous other cases, when a liberal allowance has been made for exaggeration, the remainder can be explained by well-understood causes. Stray wind blowing from a sea or river; a water-spout licking up the fish out of the water; a whirlwind

sending them hither and thither; all these are intelligible. The rat-shower in Norway was an extraordinary one; thousands of rats were taking their annual excursion from a hilly region to the lowlands, when a whirlwind overtook them, whisked them up, and deposited them in a field at some distance: doubtless much to the astonishment of such of the rats as came down alive.

The so-called showers of blood have had their day of terror and marvel, and have disappeared. Not that any one ever saw such a shower actually fall; but red spots have occasionally been seen on walls and stones, much to the popular dismay. Swammerdam, the naturalist, told the people of the Hague, two centuries ago, that these red spots were connected with some phenomena of insect life; but they would not believe him, and insisted that the spots were real blood, and were portents of evil times to come. Other naturalists have since confirmed the scientific opinion.

A SIGHT IN THE BUSH.

It would be difficult to imagine a greater contrast than there is between the winter and the summer months in South Australia. Picture to yourself the most beautiful May day at home—and you have the former; picture to yourself clouds of dust, a glaring sun, the thermometer at one hundred and fifteen in the shade—and you have the latter.

The life the working man leads in the Bush is quite as peculiar as the climate. He comes, generally walking, carrying his bedding and all his other worldly possessions on his back, looking for a job. When he obtains one he stops; when it is done, he gets a cheque for his work, which he spends generally at the nearest public-house. As soon as he is penniless (which is very soon), he starts again from station to station, as before. Who can imagine anything much more miserable than a man without a friend or relation in the world (as thousands of these men are), thus wandering about, destitute of ambition, destitute of spirit, destitute of everything that man should be possessed of? These wretched fellows have but one desire, one hope, one aim in this world, and that is to "make a cheque," so as to be able to go and have a beastly carouse, in which they appear more like fiends than men. They will take forty or fifty pounds to a Bush

public-house, and in less than a week will leave it absolutely penniless, and will become dependent upon the scattered stations for food. Of course you meet with good and respectable men among these wanderers, but, as a whole, the working hands of the Bush are infamous and degraded.

I saw a startling sight once in the Bush. I was riding through a thick scrub, where there was no road or track of any kind, when suddenly I came upon a man, the like of whom I had never seen before, and hope never to see again. This happened in the middle of summer, and there was no water within twenty miles. The man was about forty years of age, of middle height, with a long ragged beard and whiskers. As I came upon him, he was walking bare-foot: with his eyes, which protruded from his head, staring fixedly before him, as if he saw something which irresistibly attracted him. He had not even a "billy" to carry water in, neither had he a bag or bundle of any kind; but in his hand he carried a lump of uncooked fat. His shirt and trousers hung in shreds about him, and his head was bare. There was something most terrible in that stare of his, so ghastly and hopeless was it in its intensity. He seemed totally unconscious of my presence, and, even after I called out to him, paid no attention whatever to me. For some seconds after he had gone by, I sat in my saddle, hardly knowing what to do. At last I determined to follow him, and cantering up, brought my whip down sharply on his shoulder. He turned and confronted me, but for some time seemed not in the least to suspect that I was a reality.

I asked him who he was, and where he was going? But to all my questions, I could only get an indistinct muttering for an answer, while his arms worked incessantly backward and forward in the air, and his body shook from head to foot. At length, he made a sort of mute appeal for water, which I gave him; then, he started away as before, walking at a tremendous pace, with his eyes always fixed on one spot in advance of him. I learned afterwards that he wandered about for some months in the most impenetrable parts of the Bush, destitute of everything, and that his sole food was uncooked fat, which he picked up outside shepherds' huts. He was quite insane, and, after wandering about in this way for a long time, perished in the Bush. It is not wonderful that he died

there; but it is very wonderful that he lived there so long, under such fearful circumstances.

THE TONTLA WOOD.

You may perform that operation, which is commonly called a day's march, many times before you will find a popular tale, more prettily fanciful in its leading idea, and more peculiar in its details, than one which is told by some of the inhabitants of Revel, with respect to the Tontla Wood: a forest which, according to tradition, once stood in a district to the north of the Lake Peipus or Tschudskoi, but of which no traces are now to be found.

This Tontla Wood, if we are to trust the story, was an object of curiosity and terror to all who lived in its neighbourhood, and, so greatly did the latter feeling prevail, that it was a complete obstacle to the gratification of the former. A few who had ventured just to step within its precincts repeated that they had seen through the trees something like a ruined house, surrounded by a swarm of human beings, among whom old women and half-clad children formed the majority. One bolder than the rest, who penetrated further than his more timid predecessors, was rewarded for his trouble by the discovery of things still more marvellous; which is, indeed, not saying much, since old hags and ragged urchins are everywhere common. This courageous adventurer saw a large fire, round which women and children were gathered—some squatted on the ground, others dancing. Particularly conspicuous was a withered beldam, who, with a broad iron ladle, scattered burning ashes on the turf, whereupon the children went screaming into the air, and fluttered about the smoke like so many owls, until, apparently weary of their pastime, they settled down again. Presently an old man made his appearance with a sack on his shoulders larger than himself, and at once became an object of general persecution, for the women and children danced round him trying to steal away his load, while he contrived to evade them. With a black cat, nearly as big as a foal, which, with glaring eyes, had been sitting at the door of a neighbouring hut, he was less fortunate, for this sprang upon the sack, and then vanished into the hut.

At this juncture the bold investigator's eyes became dazzled and his head began to

swim. Consequently the narrative of his adventure, which he detailed to a circle of admiring listeners was, much to their disappointment, cut short. However, his scanty information served to confirm the ill-repute in which the forest was held, and during the time of the Swedish domination in the province, one of the kings ordered it to be felled, hoping thus to get rid of a nuisance. His good intention was, however, not carried out: for no sooner were a few trees struck with an axe, than there was a result similar to that which ensued when Æneas attempted to clear the wood that grew from the remains of the murdered Polydore; that is to say, groans were heard, and blood issued from the wounded trunks. After this failure a wood-cutter was not to be obtained for love or money, and people were content to see smoke rising above the trees, and indicating that the forest was inhabited by somebody, without increasing their stock of information as to who that somebody might be.

At some distance from the Tontla Wood was a large cottage, numbering among its inhabitants a peasant, who having lost his first wife took unto himself a second. This lady, according to the normal habits recounted in popular tales, proved a very termagant to her husband's daughter Elsie, a sharp little girl about seven years old. The child's father, leaning to the stronger side, furthered the oppression of her stepmother, till she found life altogether intolerable. One day, when the Spartan discipline had lasted for about two years, Elsie went out with some young companions to gather berries, and straying unwittingly to the edge of the Tontla Wood, found such an abundance of fine strawberries, that the surface of the ground was completely red. The sudden discovery of a big lubberly boy that they had actually entered the dreaded forest, and the shout by which he made his discovery known, caused all the children to take to their heels with the exception of Elsie, in whose bosom an intense love of strawberries was an antidote to fear. Moreover, she plausibly argued within herself, that bad as the Tontla folks might be, they could scarcely be worse than her stepmother was, and that, therefore, it was expedient to stop where she was, rather than hurry back, and possibly fare worse. That she had acted judiciously was proved by the appearance of a little dog, who, with a bell suspended from his neck, came barking in a kindly manner towards her, and was followed by a little

girl, magnificently clad, who, warning him to silence, spoke thus:

"You are very right in not running away like the other stupid children. I will ask mamma to let me have you for a play-mate, and I know she won't refuse me, and then we'll pass all our time in playing games and eating strawberries."

This was indeed a pleasant prospect, and no one could be happier than Elsie, when her bright little friend took her by the hand and led her into the wood, while the dog barked with delight and gambolled around her, as if she were an old acquaintance.

Then, after a short time, what a fine sight met her eyes! There was a garden full of fruit-trees, on the branches of which sat birds with feathers of gold and silver: so tame that they allowed any one to play with them; and in the middle of the garden stood a house composed of glass and precious stones, that glittered like the sun. And more striking than all, before the door of the house, on a luxurious couch, lay a lady, superbly clad, who no sooner saw the two children approach, than she said:

"How d'ye do, my dear? Who's our little friend?"

"Oh, mamma!" was the answer, "I found this little girl alone in the wood. You'll let her stay here, won't you?"

"We'll see about it, my dear," said the lady, languidly; and fixing her large eyes upon Elsie, she seemed, as people have it, to look her through. "Very good," she proceeded, when the examination was over. "Come a little nearer, child. Very good indeed," she added, patting her cheek. "Do you live anywhere in this neighbourhood, my pretty child? I suppose you have parents of some sort or other; a father or mother, an uncle or aunt, or something—people generally have."

"Well, my lady," replied Elsie, "I have a father, but he is not very kind, and I have a stepmother, who is always beating me."

"She must be an exceedingly vulgar person," remarked the lady.

"Ah, my lady," continued Elsie, "you can't guess how she'll beat me when I return home alone, so long after the others!"

"Let her stay here; let her stay here!" cried the bright little girl.

"Oh! do let me stay here," implored poor Elsie. "Give me any sort of work, only don't send me away. I'll tend the flocks if there are any, and I won't pick the berries

if you don't like it. You won't send me away, will you?"

"We'll see about it," answered the lady with a smile, and rising from her couch, she sailed majestically into the house.

"Why didn't she say 'Yes'?" asked Elsie, with a dismal face.

"Ah, it's all right," said her little friend, laughing. "When mamma smiles like that, and says she'll see about things, we always know what it means. However, you stop here a minute or two, and I'll speak to her again."

Elsie, left alone, felt very anxious about the result of her friend's renewed application, and her heart beat high when the bright little girl returned from the house with a small basket in her hand.

"Mamma says that she has not made up her mind yet, but that at all events you are to spend the day with me, and we are to amuse ourselves as well as we can. Suppose we play at 'Going to sea'?"

"'Going to sea'?" echoed Elsie. "I never heard of that game."

"You'll soon learn it, it's very easy," said her little friend; and she gently opened the basket, and took from it a small flower-leaf, a shell, and two fish-bones. On the leaf, two drops of water were glistening, which the child shook upon the ground, and which, at once spreading in every direction, covered the garden and all the flowers: thus becoming a broad sea, bounded by the sky, and only leaving dry the little spot of ground on which the playmates stood. Elsie was much frightened, but her smart companion, far from giving any sign of alarm, gently placed the shell upon the water, and took a fish-bone in each hand. The shell at once expanded, gradually changing into a pretty boat that would have afforded room for a dozen children like Elsie and her friend. In this the young playmates seated themselves, Elsie trembling a little, and not knowing what to make of it, and the other laughing heartily as the bones she held were turned into a pair of oars. Over the rippling waves they went, gently rocked in their boat, and other boats came near them, all carrying children, who merrily sang as they rowed. Elsie's friend observed that the song of the others ought in courtesy to be answered; and as Elsie could not sing herself, she made up for the deficiency by the exquisite beauty of her own warbling. Never had poor Elsie felt so happy in her life; everything was so wonderful and so pretty. The words of the

songs that rose from the other boats were in a strange language, which she could not understand; and noticing the frequent recurrence of the word "Kysika," she asked her friend what it meant.

"That is my name," she said; "and all their songs are in honour of my appearance."

Presently a voice was heard, crying, "Come home, children, it is growing late."

Elsie was again somewhat terrified, but Kysika told her there was no cause for alarm, and taking the flower-leaf from the little basket, dipped it into the water, which at once contracted into two small drops, leaving them in the middle of the garden, standing near the palace as before. The boat was again a shell, and the oars were fish-bones; and when these had been put into the basket, the children walked gently home.

It was already supper-time, and round a splendidly furnished table in a spacious hall were seated four-and-twenty ladies all gorgeously dressed: the mistress of the feast being Kysika's mamma, who grandly occupied a large golden chair. The dishes served, thirteen in number, were of gold and silver, and Elsie remarked that while the contents of the others were freely consumed, one particular dish was left covered, and was eventually taken away just as it had been brought in. But, though a daughter of Eve, she did not allow curiosity to spoil her appetite, and she feasted on the dainties which were more delicious than anything she had ever tasted in her life. Of what did they consist? Were they fish, flesh, fowl, pastry, confectionery? Elsie did not know or care; although humbly born, she had a refined taste, and was not like those vulgar wretches, who spoil your dinner at the Palais Royal by bawling out that they like to know what things are made of. All the dishes were admirable, yet all different from each other; and so thoroughly was her palate gratified, that she would not even venture to surmise that the uncovered dish might possibly be nicer than the rest.

The ladies talked to each other in a very low voice, and even if they had spoken louder, Elsie would not have been edified; for, like the little boatmen, they used an unknown language. Before the supper was removed, the mistress whispered a few words to a servant, who stood behind her chair, and who, at once running out, brought back a little old man, whose beard, longer than he was tall, more than reached the

ground. This venerable person was evidently inferior in rank to the others: for he made a very humble bow, and entered no further than the threshold of the door.

"Just look at that child," said the lady of the house, pointing to Elsie; "she is only a peasant's daughter, but it's my intention to adopt her. You'll have the goodness to make an exact copy at once, so that we may send it to the village in her stead early to-morrow morning."

The old man surveyed Elsie from head to foot with eyes so sharp that they seemed to pierce her through; and when he had thus taken her measure, he made another low bow to the lady, and left the room. After the supper things had been removed, the stately lady called Elsie to her and said:

"My dear, I have now made up my mind. You shall remain as a companion to Kysika, instead of returning home; that is, if you like it."

"Like it, my lady!" exclaimed Elsie. "O, I do thank you so very much!"

Falling on her knees, she kissed the hands and feet of her benefactress, to express gratitude for her deliverance from domestic misery; but the kind lady soon raised her from the ground, patted her head and her ruddy wet cheeks, and told her that if she were a good girl she should be properly taken care of, and educated till she had become a tall woman, and able to take care of herself. Kysika's lady teachers were to be her teachers likewise, and she was to learn every sort of accomplishment, the finest of fine needlework included.

After a while the old man returned, carrying on his shoulders a tray filled with loam, and holding in his left hand a small covered basket. Setting these articles on the ground, he went briskly to work, and made a small image of human form, in the hollow stomach of which he placed three pickled anchovies, and a piece of bread. Then he made a hole in the breast of the figure, and this served as a door for the admission of a black worm, at least a yard long, which he took out of the basket, and which by its wriggling and struggling showed that it anticipated its future abode with anything but delight. Wriggling and struggling were, however, useless; the worm was obliged to follow the prescribed direction, and the aperture being duly closed, the image was carefully inspected by the lady.

"All we want now, is a drop of our young friend's blood," said the old man. And, as

according to Esthonian notions, the use of blood commonly implies a compact with the Evil One, Elsie shuddered not a little. However, the lady soon persuaded her that the blood with which she parted would only be used for her own good, and concluded her discussion by puncturing the girl's arm with a golden needle, which she handed to the old man, who at once thrust it into the left side of the image. He then put the figure into his basket, in order, as he said, that it might grow, and he promised the lady that he would show her on the following morning what a fine work of art he had executed. The extraordinary duties of the day having been thus satisfactorily discharged, every lady retired to rest, and Elsie was conducted by the smartest of chambermaids into a room where a nice bed had been prepared for her.

Nothing could exceed her amazement and delight when she rose in the morning, and found everything so wonderfully bright and comfortable. The bed on which she lay was of silk; the nightgown that she wore, was of the finest quality; and on a chair by the wall lay the splendid dress which she was to wear. She was only too glad when the smart chambermaid reappeared and told her that it was time to get washed and combed, for now she could adorn herself with all her new finery. But what charmed her most was the dainty little pair of shoes destined for her feet. Hitherto she had been accustomed to walk barefoot; and to her eyes a pair of shoes, even badly cobbled, was a marvellous luxury. What words, then, could express her admiration at the shoes which lay before her? The clothes she had worn yesterday were not to be seen, nor did she make any curious inquiries concerning them. But when she had left the room, and joined the company in the great hall, she found that even her humble garments had been put to good use.

The image, fashioned on the previous evening, had been a thriving image, for it had become quite as big as Elsie, and, dressed in her old clothes, looked exactly like her.

"That image is the very image of me!" exclaimed Elsie; but, when the figure began to walk about, and made two or three diabolical faces, she could not conceal her terror.

"Don't be frightened, child," said the kind lady. "Nothing can harm you here. We intend this interesting object as a present to your stepmother. We may say of it,

as people will say of the photographic portraits that will be invented after several centuries shall have passed, that, as a likeness, it is not flattering, but nevertheless it will sufficiently answer its purpose. Your stepmother wants something to beat, and this lubberly form of clay can stand any amount of beating, without wince or flinch. But it has a temper of its own, embodied in the black worm, and if your stepmother does not mend her manners she may in time find that she has met her match."

Elsie was not hypocritical enough to express any anxiety about the trouble which her counterpart might occasion to her stepmother, and as soon as the "sham" was out of her sight she dismissed it from her thoughts, resolved to devote all her energies to the important duty of enjoying herself, for the performance of which she had such ample opportunity. The regularity with which the affairs of the household were conducted was in itself admirable, and the means that were used to promote this regularity were more admirable still. The talents of the old gentleman who had fashioned her counterpart were by no means confined to modelling. He could, and did, make himself generally useful. Regularly every day, when the hour of dinner had arrived, he went to a huge block of granite that stood some twenty paces or so from the palace, took a short silver staff out of his bosom, and struck the rock three times, making it sound like the most musical of bells. The answer to this gentle summons was the appearance of a golden cock, who, springing from the block, perched upon its summit, crowing and flapping his wings with all his might and main. Nor was this a mere expression of idle joy. At every crow and flap, something serviceable issued from the granite. Crow and flap the first produced a long table, furnished with as many plates as were required for the company, which glided into the dining-hall of its own accord. Crow and flap the second were followed by a sally of chairs, which set themselves in their proper places round the table, and then came a succession of well-laden dishes, which, flying through the air, arranged themselves in due order. (That the dinner was not served à la Russe may be explained by the fact that in those days Revel was not a Russian province.) Flasks of mead, which was the beverage of the repast, and fruits of the choicest quality, came whizzing along from the same source, and, when every one had eaten enough, the clever old gentleman again tapped the block

with his wand, again the cock crowed, and all the things, with one exception, returned to their granite home, the table bringing up the rear. The exception was the thirteenth dish, which was always left untasted, and which was chased by a black cat to the summit of the rock, where the pursuer and pursued both remained quietly by the side of Chanticleer, until all three were fetched by the old gentleman, who, taking the dish in his hand, the cat under his arm, and the cock on his shoulder, vanished with his strange burden into the granite. Indeed, this same block of granite was at once the store-room, the lumber-room, the larder, the cellar, and the wardrobe, of the establishment: the practically-crowding cock calling forth not only eatables and drinkables, with instruments for their consumption, but every kind of wearing apparel, and jewellery of every sort.

After a few years, Elsie had become mistress of the strange language talked by the lady and her party: a language not to be taught in six lessons, like French and German in the nineteenth century. One thing, however, she did not learn, and that was the meaning of the thirteenth dish which regularly appeared on the table every day, was regularly left untasted, and was regularly chased by the black cat. She ventured to put a question on this subject to her friend Kysika, but that generally amiable young lady suddenly became rather glum, and said that she could give no information, with an air which showed that the difficulty lay less in the ability than in the will. Shortly afterwards, Elsie was summoned before the lady of the house, who, looking somewhat less pleasant than usual, treated Elsie to a little wholesome lecture.

"Elsie, dear," she said, "bad habits should be nipped in the bud, since otherwise they are not only confirmed, but grow worse. I understand that you have been asking questions about the thirteenth dish. Don't do so again. Such inquiries indicate, not merely idle curiosity, but something like greediness. Were our repast scanty they would be but natural. By my prophetic gift I can foresee that, centuries hence, a boy named Oliver, being scantily fed, will ask for more; but Oliver's case is not yours. Twelve dishes are surely sufficient for any reasonable dinner. However, thus much I will tell you. The covered dish does not contain the delicious article, which, centuries hence, will be called a Nesselrode pudding, and if we

used a French menu, we should set it down as 'Bienfait caché.' Let me add that if once the cover were removed from the dish, all our happiness would be destroyed for ever."

Thoroughly convinced that a banquet consisting of twelve eatable dishes was not to be surpassed, Elsie (who, through circumstances of time and place had never dined at Greenwich) asked no more questions, and the little lecture was the only ripple that disturbed her peaceful happiness during her residence in the Tontla Wood. As time went on, she became an excellent scholar: the teacher who gave daily lessons to Kysika instructing her also. And, strange to say, her progress was far greater than that of her little friend. While Elsie's mind expanded, Kysika seemed always to remain a child, and was never better pleased than when she could put aside her books and work, and play at "going to sea." There was a growing discrepancy between the playmates, and Kysika, looking at Elsie with tearful eyes, would often say:

"How sorry I am you are grown so tall! You'll soon be too big to play with me."

When nine years had passed in uninterrupted felicity, poor Elsie received a heavy blow. One evening, to her great surprise, she was told that the lady wished to see her in her bedchamber; never before had she been summoned at that hour, and her beating heart seemed to tell her that some misfortune was at hand. She had no sooner crossed the threshold than she perceived that the lady's cheeks were very red, and that her eyes had been bathed with tears, which she was wiping away, as if to conceal them from Elsie.

"My dear child," she began, after a pause, "the time has come when we must part."

"Part!" cried Elsie. "No, no, dear lady, we will never part until we are separated by death. You have always been so kind, so very kind, to me. Do not thrust me from you now."

"Be calm, child, be calm," said the lady, with an effort. "You do not know what happiness is in store for you."

"I want no happiness apart from you," replied the girl. "All the happiness I have ever found, has been your gift. Oh, do not, do not, thrust me from you. Let me be your servant, your slave, but do not thrust me forth into the wide, dreary world. Better to have left me in wretchedness with my wicked stepmother, than to have raised me to a heaven of joy, and then to plunge me back in misery!"

"My poor child," said the lady, wiping her eyes, "I am just as sorry to part with you as you are to part with me, but there are certain unalterable laws that we must all obey. You are a mere mortal, and in the course of a few years must perish and pass away. We, though our form is human, are beings of a higher nature, to whom death is altogether foreign. In childhood—which sees before it, not death, but life—there is something akin to immortality, and while you were a child you could remain with us; but your childhood is at an end now. Good-night!"

Elsie went sadly to bed, feeling that all her happiness was gone, and that a blank lay before her. On the following morning she again saw the lady, who put a golden ring on her finger, hung a golden locket about her neck, and, taking an affectionate leave of her, consigned her to the care of the old man. No sooner was she alone, than the old man tapped her head with his wand, and at once she felt that she was changed into a bird. With the instinct of a bird she shot up into the air, and flew for several days in a southern direction, feeling rather tired, but by no means hungry, and not in the least missing the twelve dishes of the Tontla Wood dinner. Her flight was, however, suddenly and painfully stopped by a sharp arrow, which brought her to the ground, where for some time she lay senseless. When she recovered, she found herself restored to human form, lying under a hedge, and was soon agreeably surprised by the appearance of a fine prince, who, leaping from his horse, assured her that for half a year he had seen her nightly in a dream, and that on the day before he had shot an eagle, which must have dropped on the very spot on which he now stood. Nothing remained for Elsie but to go home with her adorer to the court of the king, his father, where she was received with great magnificence. This part of the tale is so utterly clumsy, poor, and common-place, that we get over it with all possible speed.

Luckily, the facts relating to the future of Elsie's counterpart save our story from a lame and impotent conclusion. No sooner had the figure fashioned by the ingenious old gentleman reached Elsie's village, than it was seized by its supposed stepmother, and thrashed with ill-bestowed vigour. This process was repeated every day till, on one occasion, the fiery dame being more irate than usual, threatened to kill the thing of loam, and, accordingly,

pressed its throat with both hands so tightly, that at last a black worm flew out of its mouth, and bit her too active tongue, and caused immediate death. The horror instinctively felt by Elsie's father, when, on returning home, he saw the body of his wife stretched upon the floor, soon gave place to unmitigated joy, when he reflected that he had got rid of a very bad bargain. So, regaling himself with three anchovies and a piece of bread which he found on the table, he retired to rest. Next morning he was found dead in his bed, and was shortly afterwards buried in the same grave with his wife. Elsie's counterpart had vanished altogether, and of the events we have just narrated nothing was heard by Elsie: who lived a happy princess, and on the death of the old king became a happy queen, delighting to recount the history of her life in the Tontla Wood, omitting all antecedents. Strange to say, the wood itself was never seen after it had been quitted by Elsie.

Readers, have you not, every one, at some period of your lives, lived in a Tontla Wood, which seemed a world in itself, never destined to perish; and which, when it had passed away, you felt could never be recalled?

THE LEGEND OF DUNBLANE.

IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

"It was in the year 1793," said my uncle, "that I made the acquaintance of William Dunblane, afterwards Lord Dunblane, at the University of St. Andrews. His bachelor uncle, the then lord, was not a very rich man, and he was a stingy one. William's father, too, was still alive, so that the young man was somewhat straitened as to money. We were just of an age, and my father was very liberal to me. Our relative positions, therefore, were more equal at that time than they afterwards became; and, in spite of the great difference of rank, Dunblane singled me out to be his favourite companion. I cannot say why this was, unless it may have been that I was a more patient listener than many other young fellows, to his long stories about his ancestry, and that while I always endeavoured to tell him the truth, I was more indulgent to this weakness of family pride than the rest were. They used to laugh at him, at first; but that, he soon showed them, he would never stand. He was very strong, and very passionate; and his face at such moments

became as that of one possessed with a devil."

It was in these words that my uncle, Mr. Carthews, senior partner in the firm of Carthews and Bontor, of Aberdeen and Calcutta, used generally to begin the following strange narrative. Like many Scotchmen of his day, he had a somewhat inordinate reverence for rank; but it was balanced, in his case, by a business-like appreciation of the value of money. What is of more import, however, to the matter in hand, was his strict and fearless adherence to truth, joined to an extremely kind nature. These characteristics were conspicuous in every transaction of a long life. He was a shrewd, upright man, universally respected in the city where he passed the best part of his life: "stiff in opinions," occasionally prolix, but of a sound, clear judgment, and unimpeached honesty. In the narrative, therefore, which I shall try to give, as far as possible, in my uncle's own words, there is, I am confident, no wilful misrepresentation, no jot or tittle added to the facts, as he believed them to be. And his opinion of those facts, I take it, was formed very deliberately. I heard him tell the story repeatedly, yet it never varied in the smallest particular; and I know it invariably impressed his hearers with a sense of horrible reality. Imagine that the ladies have left the room; three or four men are seated round the polished mahogany; my uncle, a white-haired, keen-eyed man of seventy, bids us draw our chairs nearer the fire, and, passing round a magnum of his fine old port, he thus continues the story, of which I have given the opening words, with that incisive Scotch accent, and in that measured phrase, which seems to weigh each word in the balance, and reject it if found wanting.

Dunblane was an unpopular man. Men could not make him out. His manner was often disagreeable, and he was subject to moody fits, when he would speak to no one. He was capable of kind and generous acts, but implacable in his dislikes; and he never forgot an injury. I could manage him better than any one, and he would generally stand the truth from me; but his rage was a terrible thing to witness. I have never seen anything like it. Men used to say, "Keep clear of Dunblane when the fit is on him; he will stick at nothing."

The French Revolution was then at its height. Dunblane was a hot royalist, and used to be thrown into fresh transports of fury with the news of every act subversive

of the king's authority. One night a man, in my room, who professed Republican sentiments, defended the conduct of the Assembly in imprisoning the royal family. Dunblane got up and flung a bottle at his head. There was a fine row, and it was arranged that the two men must fight the next morning. I secretly gave notice to the authorities, however, who interfered, and some sort of peace was patched up; but Dunblane never spoke to his antagonist again as long as he was in the university. I mention this, as I happen to recal the circumstance, just to give you an idea of the man's violence, and of the depth of his resentment.

I can remember, too, a conversation we had one day about marriage. He had been complaining of his poverty, but said that, nevertheless, he meant to marry early.

"You see, it is necessary that I should have an heir, lest the direct line become extinct. There is no one, after me."

"Do nothing in a hurry," I replied. "It would be a great misfortune, no doubt, that the title and estates should pass away to another branch of the family, but it would be a still greater one to have your whole life embittered by an unhappy marriage. You are young; you have life before you. Be quite sure it is for your happiness, ere you take such a step as this."

His reply was very characteristic.

"Oh," he said, "it is all very well for you to talk, who have plenty of money, and have no great name as an inheritance. We trace back our descent for six hundred years; it is a duty we owe to the country to keep up the family. If I was fortunate enough to be in your position, I should please myself. But, as it is, everything else is of secondary importance. My lord is always telling me so, and I suppose he is right. I must marry a woman with money, and I must have an heir. You don't know," he added, with the black look gathering on his brow, "*how* essential this is."

I assured him that I fully recognised the obligations which a great name and title entail, but that I could not think that to contract a hasty, ill-considered marriage could ever answer in the long run.

"Ah!" he said. "Then you have never heard the old prophecy in the family:

When five Dunblanes have had no son,
Then shall the line direct be run.

My uncle is the *fourth* lord who has had no son. If he should survive my father, and that I should succeed him, I shall be the

fifth. You see now how necessary it is I should marry early."

"On account of a foolish distich!" I replied. His superstition almost amounted to an insanity; and I never would give in to it, though I confess that I have known more curious cases of such prophecies being fulfilled than any sceptical Englishman would believe. However, that has nothing to say to the matter in hand. Dunblane repeatedly referred to this prediction, which had evidently taken a hold upon his mind, not to be shaken by any words of mine. He would brood for hours over this and similar subjects. And among them, I have little doubt was one to which he never referred at that time, seeing that I treated his superstitions with unbecoming levity—a subject of which I had no knowledge for many years afterwards, but which was destined to have a fatal influence on his life.

In '96 I left college, and was sent out to our branch house in Calcutta. I heard the following year of Dunblane's marriage to a Miss Cameron, an orphan of good family, though not noble, said to possess both wealth and beauty; and I heard no more. He never wrote to me, nor did I expect it. Our lines of life were now quite different, and though I knew that he would always retain a friendly recollection of me, correspondence was another matter. I was a man of business, and engrossed in affairs in which he could take no interest; while I, on the other hand, knew nothing of the persons and the circumstances by which he was surrounded. I shall always regret that he did *not* write to me during those years; though probably no written words of mine could have been of any avail in arresting him: but I have occasionally found, in life, that the truth, though discarded at the time, will come back at some unexpected moment and give the devil the lie. Now the devil had it all his own way with Dunblane for years. His father, to whom I think he was really attached, was dead; his uncle, whom he disliked and feared, would not die. The uncle, I am told, proposed this marriage to him, and though Dunblane was indifferent—or more than indifferent—to the lady, he consented to marry her. This was the fatal error which nothing could retrieve. It was the first step down-hill, after which the descent became more and more rapid every year.

In 1803 Lord Dunblane died, at last, die, and, a few months later, my own father's death recalled me to Aberdeen, where I took his place as head of the house. One

day, about a year after my return, George Pilson (you remember Pilson and Pilson, the attorneys? very respectable firm) was in my office, and chanced to speak of Dunblane Castle, where he had lately been. His father, I found out, was Lord Dunblane's man of business; and I questioned George as to his lordship's present condition and mode of life. His answer was far from satisfactory.

"His lordship's strangeness, and his violent ebullitions of temper have increased very much upon him of late," he said. "It is supposed that this is greatly owing to the fact that after nearly eight years of marriage there is no heir to the title. Then his wife is a person singularly unsuited to him in all ways. Her ladyship is handsome, but wanting in common-sense, garrulous in the extreme, laughing immoderately in and out of season, and, if I may be allowed to express an opinion on such a point, deficient in the dignity befitting her station. These things are perpetual blisters, I fancy, to his lordship. Her ladyship, in a word, is what may be called a 'provoking woman,' and as his lordship is not the most patient of men you may guess the consequences."

I replied that I was more sorry than surprised: from what I knew of Lord Dunblane I never expected that such a marriage—one purely of interest—could turn out well. "And yet," I added, "if he had fallen into other hands, I think he might have become a very different man. There were germs of good in him."

At this George Pilson remained silent for a few moments, a silence which I thought most eloquent. He then proceeded to speak of the castle, which he described as one of the finest monuments of the fifteenth century remaining in the country.

"His lordship is very justly proud of it," he said, "though with his pride is mingled a certain superstitious awe, as, no doubt, you know? I dare say he has often spoken to you of the secret room in the castle?"

"No," I replied, "I do not remember that he ever did. What is there special about this room?"

He replied, "No one knows exactly where it is except the owner, the heir, and one other person; who happens, at present, to be my father. The family superstition concerning this room is very strong, and I believe they shrink from speaking of it."

"But what does it arise from?" I inquired.

He said, "The legend runs that some

former Lord of Dunblane sold himself to the devil in this room; the plain English of which is, I imagine, that he committed some foul crime there. At all events, this room has remained shut up for centuries; and it was predicted by one of those sibyls, who were given to such utterances, that, if ever the secret were made known the ruin of the house would follow."

"Why," I exclaimed, "this is the second prophecy that has been made about the Dunblanes! One pays dearly for belonging to these great families if one is to be subject to all these superstitions. Do you know if the room is ever opened?"

"Yes, I believe so, once a year; when, if possible, the three who are in possession of the secret meet here. My father never speaks on the subject, of course, nor does Lord Dunblane."

I asked who the heir-at-law was. He told me they had had difficulty in finding him out. He was in some office in London, and in very poor circumstances, being descended from a younger branch of the Dunblanes, who had gone to settle in England in the beginning of the last century.

After some further conversation, Pilson took his leave, and I thought very little more about Lord Dunblane and his affairs, having concerns of my own which fully occupied my thoughts at that time.

Some weeks later I received, to my surprise, a letter from Lord Dunblane, saying that he had just heard from his man of business, Mr. Pilson, that I was returned from India, and living in Aberdeen; and that it would give him great pleasure to see me again, if I would pay him a visit at Dunblane Castle. He named a day when he was expecting a party; but added that if this time was not convenient to me, I could write myself, and propose some later date. It would have been ungracious to have refused such an invitation. Indeed, I was fully sensible of the honour, though I anticipated but little pleasure from this visit, under the present circumstances. A press of business retained me in Aberdeen just then, but I promised to write, and I did write, some weeks later, to his lordship, proposing to accompany Mr. Pilson, who informed me that he was going to Dunblane Castle: for I reflected that as the stage would take me no further than Nairn, we could share a post-chaise together, which would lighten the cost of a journey, in which business had no part. His lordship replied, in a few lines, to say I should be welcome; and accordingly, on the tenth of April, 1804, Pilson and I left Aberdeen

by the stage, which started at six A.M., and reached Dunblane Castle late that afternoon. It was getting dusk as we drove up to this magnificent remnant of the feudal age—a pile which impressed one with a sense of the power which must have belonged to the Dunblanes in past ages, and heightened their claim to consideration, in my eyes at least, more than the finest modern palace could have done. It was the grandest specimen of this style of architecture I ever saw, of vast extent, its sky-outline bristling with pointed turrets, its grey walls crowning a steep height covered with venerable Scotch firs, a dry moat surrounding it, and a gateway leading into a courtyard, which occupied nearly an acre, and round which the castle was built.

Lord Dunblane met us in the hall. The nine years which had elapsed since we had parted had wrought changes in us both, no doubt; but in the man I saw before me I should scarcely have recognised my fellow-student had I met him in the streets of Aberdeen. He was grown very large, and on his face, which was lined far beyond his years, the hard, wild look which had been transient formerly, had settled down, apparently, into its habitual expression. He received me kindly, but there was no smile, as he shook my hand. The light had died out of the face, never to be rekindled. He told me I should have but a dull visit, he feared. "Had you come six weeks ago when I wanted you, you would have met a country gathering: not that I like that sort of thing: I hate it; but you and I were always very different, Carthews. Now you will find no one; and I have a good deal of business with Mr. Pilson, so that I must leave Lady Dunblane to entertain you." I assured him that I should be perfectly happy, exploring the beauties of the park and adjoining forest, and begged him not to consider me for a moment. After that he led me up-stairs to the drawing-room, where Lady Dunblane was seated alone.

The first impression produced on every one by her ladyship's beauty could not but be favourable. She was a brunette; tall, with lively eyes and brilliant teeth, which she showed a great deal when she laughed, and dark brown hair, cut short and dishevelled in loose waves over her head. Upon this occasion, however, I saw nothing but a curl or two; for she wore a species of helmet, much affected, as I afterwards learnt, by women of condition, in that day, whose husbands commanded regiments of yeomanry, as did Lord Dunblane. Being

the first head-gear of the kind which I had seen, its singularity struck me; but her ladyship carried this curious erection of buckram, fur, and tinsel, with a grace which forbade a thought of ridicule. Her beautiful figure was set off by a spenser of scarlet cloth, and a tight-fitting skirt of some white material which appeared to have been damped, it clung so close to her person. It was evident that her ladyship was not neglectful of her appearance, nor unmindful of the impression she made upon even a humble individual like myself. She came forward and greeted me with infinite suavity, saying:

"It is amiable of you, Mr. Carthews, to come and take pity on our solitude. We see no one from one week's end to another in this castle of Otranto (you have read Mr. Walpole's romance?), where all is so gloomy and mysterious that, as I tell my lord, I am really alarmed sometimes at the sound of my own voice!"

"I wish that occurred rather oftener," muttered his lordship. She continued, laughing, "Our only society are the ghosts. You don't mind them, I hope? They are all of the oldest families, for we are mighty select here, you must know. If they visit you, you must esteem it a great honour, Mr. Carthews."

I replied in the same strain, that I felt myself to be wholly unworthy of that honour; but that, if they came, I would try and receive them with becoming courtesy.

"Like my parrot," cried her ladyship, laughing. "Ho and my spaniel sleep in my room; and sometimes, in the dead of night, he calls out, 'Pray, come in, and take a chair!' which startles me from my sleep, and frightens me out of my senses!"

His lordship said something about her having no senses to be frightened out of, I believe, and something about "brutes." She caught up the word, with a laugh.

"Brutes? Oh, yes; one gets accustomed to the society of brutes of any sort, when one has nothing else all day."

Such amenities passed between the two were of constant occurrence, I suppose, for they produced little effect beyond deepening the scowl on his lordship's face. As to me, I felt very uncomfortable, and the charm of Lady Dunblane's beauty had already melted away. Though not a stupid woman, I saw she was a very foolish one. How she dared to aggravate a man of such a temperament as her husband's amazed me. It was just like a child handling fire. *She rattled away and laughed all that even-*

ing with little intermission. Lord Dunblane scarcely opened his lips. Over the wine Pilson and I talked; but his lordship stared moodily at the fire, and said nothing. I began to think I had made a mistake in coming all the way from Aberdeen for this. To play the part of chorus to a matrimonial duet of the most discordant character was not pleasant; and if my former friend was so self-absorbed as to be unable to speak to me, the sooner I left him the better. I suppose something of this sort struck him, for he said, as he wished me good night, "You must not mind my silence and absence of mind, Carthews. I am very glad to see you here; but my present position gives me many anxieties. I am irritated and worried until, by Heaven! I feel at times as if I should go mad."

Well, I went to bed, and slept soundly. I never was an imaginative man, you see, or the room I was in might have conjured up some of those spiritual visitants her ladyship had joked about, evidently to her lord's annoyance. Not that it was any worse than the other rooms in the castle. I take it they were all oak-panelled, with hideous family portraits grinning from the wall upon the occupants of the vast draped beds, in one of which I slept without waking, until the servant brought in my hot water for shaving. It was a bright morning, and at breakfast I found my host in better spirits than he had seemed the previous evening. I could not help speculating whether this could be in consequence of Lady Dunblane's absence. She never came down to breakfast, I found. Her maid, a most formidable-looking female, with red hair, and the muscles of a gillie, came in, I remember, with a tray, and took her ladyship's chocolate up to her. This person, I was afterwards told, had been born on the estate, and was devoted to Dunblane. She had been ill spoken of as a girl; but Dunblane's mother had befriended and made this Elspie her body servant, and Dunblane had insisted, when he married, on her filling the same office to his wife, much to that lady's annoyance, who wished for a modish waiting-woman from Edinburgh or London. So much for this ill-favoured specimen of her sex, to whom I never spoke in my life, but who impressed me very unfavourably whenever I saw her. After breakfast his lordship took me over the castle, and gave me all the historical associations connected with it, showing me, with great pride, the bed in which Queen Mary had slept, a yew tree, said to have been planted by Robert

Bruce, and the suit of armour borne by Dunblane of Dunblane at the battle of Bannockburn. He dilated on the glories of his house with more animation than I had yet observed: then suddenly the cloud came over him. "And to think," he said, "that all this must pass into another line—into hands that have been debased by trade" (which was not polite to me; but he entirely forgot my presence for the moment, I am sure); "to think that people who have hardly a drop of old blood in their veins, who have intermarried for generations with Smiths and Browns, and plebeian names of that kind, should come to inherit *this*, which they have no feeling for, no pride in—by G—d, it is enough to wring one's heart!"

And this was the way he went on, from time to time, bursting out in imprecations on his fate in having no heir, and upon the evil star which had risen over his house. It was in vain that I pointed out that he was young still, and in good health, and must not abandon hope. He shook his head gloomily. "The prophecy is against me: it is no use.

When five Dunblanes have had no son,
Then shall the line direct be run.

It is clear enough, is it not? I am doomed. I should have known it. When did such a prophecy ever come wrong? What a cursed fool I was to marry!"

So I thought; to marry, that is to say, as he had done; but I abstained from saying so. By-and-by his lordship took Mr. Pilson to his study, where they were engaged for some hours over business; and I was left alone to ramble about the castle, inside and out, as I would.

Remembering the story I had heard of a secret room, I counted all the windows outside, and then, returning to the castle, traversed every passage, mounted every turret, and opened every door I could, to see if the number of windows corresponded. With the help of the serving man whom I met on the stairs, and who knew all the rooms in the castle, he said, I accounted for each window satisfactorily. And after two hours' diligent endeavour to solve this mystery, I arrived at the conclusion that there could be no room—it was all humbug. I was at a time of life, you see, when over-confidence in one's own powers is apt to lead one to very false conclusions.

At luncheon Lady Dunblane appeared, and an incident, which left a painful impression on my mind, took place on that occasion. Dunblane had a peculiar aversion to her ladyship's spaniel. Strict

orders were given that he was to be confined to her ladyship's own suite of rooms, and on no account to be allowed beyond them. But some door had inadvertently been left open, and, while we were at luncheon, the spaniel ran barking into the room, round and round the table, and finally straight between his lordship's legs, who was at that moment smarting under one of his wife's sallies. He roared out in a voice of thunder:

"How often have I told you, ma'am, to keep that infernal little beast in your own room?" and he kicked out so viciously, that he sent the poor animal spinning along the oak floor to the further end of the room, where he lay howling. His mistress ran up, and seized him in her arms; the creature's leg was broken. Her ladyship shrieked, and stamped, and my lord swore: and, thoroughly sickened with the whole scene, I rose and left the room. Pilson joined me in the hall.

"What is to be the end of all this?" I said to him.

His answer was, "I am afraid to think."

"Lord Dunblane," I said, "seems to me to be losing all self-restraint. If he goes on thus, what will become of him?"

Pilson looked round him, then leaned forward and whispered, "He will end his days in a madhouse." Dunblane shut himself into his room for the rest of the afternoon. By-and-by her ladyship drove out in her coach and four, and carried her dog in her arms to a veterinary surgeon some miles off. At dinner she appeared in as brilliant spirits as ever. How much of this was real I cannot say; nor, supposing her hilarity to be assumed, whether it was done for the purpose of aggravating her lord. It certainly succeeded, if so. His moroseness was enlivened by several ferocious sallies. The conversation turned upon France, I remember, and on the probabilities of the First Consul's being made emperor, a subject that engrossed all minds just then.

"How I admire that little man!" exclaimed her ladyship. "How much greater to found a dynasty, as he is doing, than to inherit all the crowns in Europe! I begin to wish I was a Frenchwoman!"

"I begin to wish you were!" cried my lord. "There is not another British peeress who would disgrace herself by uttering such a sentiment."

She laughed aloud, and replied, "Oh! because they are less frank than I am. All women admire Le Petit Caporal in their hearts. What fun it will be if he comes

over here, and conquers us! It will be much nicer being the subjects of a great hero, instead of the subjects of a mad old king who —"

"Hold your tongue, ma'am!" shouted Dunblane, bringing his fist down upon the table with a force which made the glasses clatter: "or, if you will talk your low treasonous rubbish, go and talk it in the kitchen. You shall *not* talk it here!"

She only laughed in reply. She certainly seemed to take a delight in provoking him; and, as she knew his sensitive points, this was not difficult. I found an opportunity, over a game of cribbage, later in the evening, of asking her why she acted thus. No doubt this was somewhat of a liberty, considering our short acquaintance; but I felt I could not remain longer in the house without trying to amend matters.

"Oh!" she said, "anything for a little excitement in this horridly monotonous life. I should die of ennui if it wasn't for the tiffs with my lord."

I told her she did not know what harm she was doing; and I asked if she never felt afraid of irritating a man so passionate as his lordship.

"Bless you, no," was her reply. "It is he who is afraid, *really*, of me — of my tongue, you see. Ha, ha! No one ever answered him before; his mother, his servants, his friends, why, — you yourself, I daresay, you never contradicted him? Now, I *always* do, and I always say just what I like. He hates me, of course, but he is afraid of me, Mr. Carthews. Ha, ha, ha!"

Good heavens! I thought to myself, and these two people are tied to each other for life. Both have a fair chance of living for the next forty years. What a prospect! Even before we separated for the night she had stung him with another of her irritating speeches. There had been some talk of the steward's boy, who had tumbled from a tree, and had broken his leg. . . . "Children are a horrid bore," said Lady Dunblane. "Thank Heaven, I have no brat to be tumbling from trees, and worrying one's life out."

I dare say she did not mean it. It is hardly possible that, under the circumstances, she should not have wished for a child. The devil was in the woman, constantly prompting something to aggravate her husband. His back was towards me, on this occasion, and he said nothing, so I could only judge of the effect produced upon him by his instantly lighting a chamber candlestick and leaving the room. We saw him no more that night.

The next day and the day following only further developed the hopeless condition of affairs between Lord and Lady Dunblane. I tried once to speak to him on the subject, but I found it was in vain. An ineradicable hatred of his wife had grown up in him, which he did not attempt to conceal. When alone with him, he would occasionally converse; in her presence he seemed to be perpetually on the look-out for what might drop from her irrepressible tongue. The fourth day of my stay at the castle—the day before I was obliged to return to Aberdeen—arrived, and with it came a guest, who, although expected, was evidently anything but welcome. This was Mr. James Dunblane, the heir-at-law, who had only lately been traced, and between whom and Lord Dunblane certain communications had passed by letter. This was his first visit to the castle—a visit which, as I afterwards learnt, was a matter almost of necessity. He seemed to feel the awkwardness of his position. I do not remember much about the young man, except that he was plain in person, and very quiet. Lord Dunblane received him coldly, but politely. Lady Dunblane, after the usual fashion, plunged at once into the subject of all others his lordship shrunk from any notice of.

"So you are come, as heir-at-law, to be let into the secret of this famous room, are you? Why, it is as bad as being made a freemason! . . . Can you keep a secret, Mr. Dunblane? because, if not, untold misfortunes are to befall us." And the laugh with which she concluded sounded to me like the screech of an owl forboding evil. Lord Dunblane looked as if he could have stabbed her, but he only muttered an oath under his breath, and clenched his fist—a movement which no one saw but myself. Every incident of that evening is fresh in my recollection. I remember how she returned again and again to that subject, as though it had a fatal fascination for her, but more likely, I fear, because she saw that her husband writhed under it. She ridiculed the prophecy, and laughed at all those superstitions, which his lordship cherished as his religion. It was distressing to watch him the while. He was far quieter than usual, scarcely spoke, but sat, his arms crossed, staring at the fire, with eyes which burnt, themselves, like coals, and when he swore, which he did once or twice, it was in a suppressed voice, contrasting strangely with his usual violence. But there was a vibration in the tone which showed how strongly he was stirred. At last, it was late in the evening, and we were sitting

round her ladyship's tea-table, when she committed her crowning act of folly by offering to lay a wager with any one that she would find out the secret room herself. I need hardly say no one accepted the challenge. But she was not to be discouraged. She had seen her husband's face go white, and the look which he had shot at her gave a zest to her audacious scheme. She repeated her declaration that she would penetrate this wonderful mystery. Such things were well enough to frighten old women with in the middle ages, but how any one could believe in predictions and other rubbish of this kind in the present day passed her comprehension. For her part she had no faith in anything of the kind, and to prove what folly it was, she should leave no stone unturned to discover this room about which such a fuss was made: after which the secret, she declared, should remain one no longer. I tried to stop her; Pilson tried to stop her: it was all no use. She had got the bit between her teeth, so to speak, and away she went, partly to show off, and partly out of spite, regardless what she said, provided it produced an effect and inflamed my lord yet more. She pictured, laughingly, the cob-webbed condition of the room, and how she would turn in the housemaid with broom and duster; after which she would give an evening party there, and invite all the ghosts to come, if they chose—"indeed the black gentleman himself!" . . . Poor woman, she little knew what she was invoking. No one laughed. Even the heir, who, being shy, always smiled when required, looked too stupefied to comply with the demand on this occasion. To glance at Lord Dunblane's face was enough to check any inclination to hilarity. I have never forgotten its expression. I had witnessed his ungovernable passion scores of times, prompting him to sudden acts of violence. But now, there was a certain admixture of *fear* (she had divined rightly, I saw, when she said he was afraid of her) with the rage which trembled through his whole frame, the like of which I have never beheld but once since in my life. I saw a beast-tamer enter the hyenas' den at the show last year. The aspect of their malignant fury cowed by terror, but watching for its opportunity to burst forth, the savage hissing wherewith they received the lash and showed their fangs, recalled to me Dunblane's demeanour as he listened to his wife. . . . At

last, I could stand it no longer, and made up my mind to tell a lie.

"Lady Dunblane." I said, "like most Scotchmen, I am a trifle superstitious. This is my last night under your hospitable roof, and I am sure you would not willingly disturb its rest. You are so happily constituted as to be above fear of *any kind*. Others are weaker. Let me earnestly advise you to leave all the superstitions connected with Dunblane Castle alone. Believe me, 'there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in your ladyship's philosophy.'"

She burst out laughing, as usual. "Oh, Mr. Carthews, I'm ashamed of you. But I see what it is. You are afraid, not of the ghosts and the predictions, but of my lord. Well, I shall see you in May, when I pass through Aberdeen on my way south, and I shall tell you all about it then; for, depend upon it, I shall have found out the secret by that time."

And so, in the insolence of youth and high spirits and an indomitable will, she bade me good-night, poor woman, and I never saw her again.

Dunblane had left the room. Whether it was pre-arranged that Pilson and the young heir were to join him in his study, and that later in the night the door of the secret room should be unclosed, I know not. I am inclined, from one or two circumstances, to think that it was so; but, again, there are other things which have made me doubt it. At all events, when we three bade each other good-night, neither Pilson nor young Dunblane dropped anything which should lead me to suppose they were not going straight to their own rooms. They were not to leave the castle till the day after me. It was quite possible, therefore, that the chamber was to be unlocked after my departure.

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VERONICA.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE."

IN FIVE BOOKS.

BOOK III.

CHAPTER VI. LONELY.

THE prince was a little near-sighted, and not deeming it good manners to use the glass that dangled by the black ribbon over his waistcoat, when he found himself face to face with "miladi," he had approached to within a short distance of her before he became aware of the agitated expression of her face, and the unusual carelessness of her toilet.

The instinct of coquetry would have prevented Veronica from presenting herself before Barletti in any unbecoming attire. But if she had given the matter her most serious consideration, she could have found none better calculated to set off her striking beauty than that which she now wore. A long white wrapper fell to her feet. She had covered her head with the voluminous folds of a white lace shawl, one end of which was thrown across her breast and fell over her shoulder: and beneath the delicate snowy lace her long black hair streamed rippling to her waist.

"Oh, prince, there you are!" said Veronica. "Paul told me you were in the west loggia, and I ran down to catch you before I dressed for dinner."

The words were flattering, inasmuch as they implied great eagerness on the lady's part to see him. But he must have been a fatuously vain man who could have looked in Veronica's face as she spoke and have supposed her to be thinking of paying him compliments.

Barletti bowed, and stood awaiting what more she had to say.

"Have you seen Paul?"

"Yes, signora. I saw him as I came in, but I did not speak to him."

"Then you do not know that Sir John has been, and still is, ill?"

"Dio buono! Ill? No. I know nothing. What is the matter with *co bon Gale*?"

"I hope it is nothing serious: but I cannot tell. I am uneasy about him; very uneasy."

Barletti did not believe that miladi could be suffering any acute anxiety on the score of her lord's health. And he would have considered it *a priori* very unlikely that she should so suffer. But he thought it highly proper and becoming that she should assume anxiety. A frank show of indifference would have disgusted him.

"Oh you must not alarm yourself, *cara signora*," he said, soothingly. "What are the symptoms? How long has he been ill? I wonder that Paul said nothing to me!"

Veronica hurriedly described the singular swoon or trance into which Sir John had fallen. "He says the heat made him faint," she added, "but——" And she shook her head doubtfully.

"Really it is not unlikely," said Barletti. "It may have been a *giramento di capo*—a mere swimming of the head. Such things are not uncommon, and *il nostro caro Gale* is not very strong. Pray tell me if there is anything I can do for you in Florence. I shall, of course, go back at once. I could not think of intruding on you under the circumstances."

"No, no, no! That is just the very thing I hastened down to say. You must remain and dine here, and stay all the evening until Sir John retires."

"But—would he not prefer——" began

Barletti in some astonishment. Veronica interrupted him, speaking very fast, and in a low tone, and glancing round nervously to see that they were not observed.

"Yes; no doubt he would prefer that you should go away. But I prefer that you should stay. I beg you to stay. He has a whim to disguise that he is ill. He will not have a doctor. He has given Paul orders to keep it secret from the servants. It may be nothing, but I am so inexperienced in illness, I cannot judge. I am alone here. I am afraid of—of—the responsibility. You must remain and watch him, and let me know what you think. And—listen—do not allow it to be seen that I have urged you to stay! Do not admit that I have said a word to you about his illness. I rely on you, remember! And, above all, say no syllable to Paul."

She turned away, re-entered the saloon by the glass door, and ran swiftly and softly up the stairs, leaving Barletti in a condition of considerable perplexity.

He remained in the garden wandering up and down until the dinner-bell sounded. Then, as he was going into the house across the paved courtyard, a servant who had been sent to seek him, met him, and preceded him into the dining saloon. It was a vast vaulted hall, whose dreariness was on too great a scale to be much mitigated by such French upholstery as had been hastily employed to decorate it for Sir John Gale's use.

The table was as big as the deck of a small yacht. The wax lights abundantly set forth on a huge black walnut-wood sideboard, and on the tall marble mantelpiece, and on the table itself, seemed to glimmer with hopeless feebleness, as though they were conscious of their inability to illuminate the vague dimness of the space. There was a little island of light in the centre of the table-cloth, but it seemed only to enhance the surrounding gloom.

Veronica was already in the dining-hall when Barletti entered it. Paul, too, was there, officiating as butler at the sideboard.

Barletti bowed profoundly, and saluted Veronica as though he then saw her for the first time that evening.

"Good evening, prince," said she, with a careless, haughty bend of the head.

In her rich evening dress, and with her composed disdainful grace, she seemed a very different woman from her who had spoken to him in the loggia half an hour ago.

A cover was laid for Sir John in his ac-

customed place. Barletti observed it, and stood for a moment after Veronica was seated, as though waiting for some one. "And Gale?" he said, interrogatively.

"Oh, Sir John will not dine with us. He felt a little tired with the heat this afternoon. We shall find him after dinner in the salottino. Sit down, prince."

"You permit? I am not *de trop*?"

"No, no. I am glad of the sight of a human face. This hall is the gloomiest, dreariest place! I have never quite got over an idea that it is haunted, and I find myself sometimes making out mysterious shapes in the dark corners. One evening in the summer, when the windows were wide open, a great bat flew in, and almost brushed my face! Ugh!"

They ate their dinner under Paul's grave impassible eyes, and with Sir John's empty chair between them.

"Thy master is not really indisposed, friend, eh?" asked the prince of Paul, as the latter was serving him with wine.

"Sir John missed his usual siesta, and was tired. He is quite well now, Signor Principe."

"Ah, bravo! It has been a devil of a summer. And the heat seems as if it would never leave off any more."

The dinner seemed to be spun out to an intolerable length. Barletti had a very excellent appetite, and ate on steadily. Veronica ate but little; but she drank off three glasses of champagne, whereat Barletti, accustomed to the almost ascetic temperance of his own countrywomen in the matter of wine, marvelled considerably. He could not help observing, also, that she did appear to be really thoughtful and anxious, falling every now and then into fits of musing. And at this, attributing her careful brow to uneasiness regarding her husband, he marvelled still more!

When the dessert was put on the table, Paul prepared to withdraw. Veronica desired him to remain: speaking in English, of which language Barletti understood very little when he saw it, and almost nothing when he heard it.

"I must return to Sir John, *miladi*."

"Then tell Ansano to remain, and as soon as Sir John is in the salottino, let me know."

The other servants went away, leaving Ansano to hand round the dishes of fruit, which, in his zeal, and the elation of being left to his own devices free from Paul's supervision, he did with feverish energy; until Veronica put an end to his service

by desiring him to go and stand still at the sideboard.

The dining-hall, like all the suite of rooms on the west side of the house, had a door communicating with the loggia outside. Veronica bade Barletti finish his wine at his leisure, and rose from her chair saying that she would go and walk in the loggia until Sir John should be ready to receive them.

A request to be permitted to accompany her was on Barletti's lips, but she checked him by a look, and went out alone, pacing slowly and regularly up and down under the stone arcades. The night was dark, and since sunset the air had grown cool. Veronica lifted the gauze upper tunic of her dress, and wrapped her shoulders and arms in it. As she walked solitarily, a feeling of intense loneliness came upon her, such as she had never experienced in her life.

Outside in the darkness she looked in at the lighted hall each time she passed the glass door. She saw the brightness of the table, glittering with glass and silver, and adorned with flowers. She saw Barletti seated there. His face was towards the window. The light fell on his bald forehead and dark eyes, and mellowed the tint of his pale skin. He looked like a portrait by Vandyke. She regarded all this with an inexpressible sensation of *strangeness*. It seemed to her that she was looking on the room, and on the man, for the first time. It seemed to her that she had no part in anything within those walls. No one could see her out there in the darkness. And to look on even the most familiar face, being oneself unseen, gives it an unfamiliar aspect.

The fact of being shut out there alone in the darkness and of looking in upon the lighted rooms produced in her a sense of complete isolation: isolation of spirit as well as of body. What did her existence matter to any one? If she could at that moment transport herself to Shipley-in-the-Wold, and peep in at the vicarage windows, she would see no void that her absence had made. It would all be going on much as usual. Her father would be reading by the fire—they must have fires now in the evening—and Maud would be reading too, or perhaps playing softly on the old piano. Or, it might be that Mr. Plew was there, prosing on in his mild, monotonous voice. And outside, the wide flats would be looming dreary and vague; and near Sack's farm the sheep and the white cattle would glimmer dotted about the pastures fast asleep. She could fancy it all! So, thought

she, a ghost must feel revisiting unperceived the haunts of the body.

The idea of death thus conjured up, made her shiver, and nervously walk faster. How lonely she felt! How lonely, how lonely!

Veronica had never in her life comprehended what was meant by a "pleasing melancholy." Sadness of any kind was utterly distasteful to her; and aroused either a species of impatient resentment, or a headlong abandonment of herself to despair, which had some anger in it too.

All at once the windows of the salottino threw out rays of brightness into the night. Sir John must be there. The rays came through the interstices of the wooden venetian blinds. She could not look into the salottino as she could into the dining-hall, where the shutters were left open. She felt a sudden yearning for light, and shelter, and companionship. It was too intolerable being out there alone with her own thoughts in the darkness.

She went into the house through the dining-room where Barletti was still sitting at the table. He had drunk scarcely any wine since Veronica left him; but to kill the time he had eaten nearly the whole contents of a large glass dish of sweetmeats, and was beginning to find that occupation pall on him when she reappeared.

Ansano stood sentinel in the background. He had not found the half hour a pleasant one, either. If he might have been permitted to distinguish himself by handing to the signor principe every dish on the table in regular sequence, he would have been content. For Ansano, like the rest of the servants, was little more than a mere rustic, and the delighted pride he felt in such professional promotion as was implied in being trusted to do any service unwatched by Paul, wore still the gloss of novelty. But to stand there, at the sideboard, still and silent, while the other servants were supping socially together, was a severe trial.

Veronica walked at once through the dining-hall to the salottino, and Barletti followed her. Sir John was lying on a sofa. A lamp stood on a small table near his head, but it was so shaded as to throw no light on his face, although it illuminated the gay flowered dressing-gown he wore, and his white wrinkled hands.

"Here is Prince Cesare de' Barletti," said Veronica, seating herself on a low chair near the sofa. "He wanted to go away when he heard that you were not well. But I made him stay."

"Oh!" said Sir John, in a kind of grunt.

The greeting was so exceptionally uncourteous even for Sir John, that Barletti rose up as though he were moved by a spring over which his will had no control, and said, "I regret my intrusion. If I had supposed for a moment that monsieur le baron was seriously ill——"

"Who says so? I am *not* seriously ill!" snarled Sir John.

"Of course not!" interposed Veronica, quickly. "I said so. If Sir John had been seriously ill, it would be another matter. But his indisposition was of the very slightest, and it is now quite gone."

Either, she thought, he must confess to being so indisposed that the presence of a stranger irked him, or he must ask Barletti to remain. But Sir John did neither. Whichever one of several given courses of action was most pleasing to Sir John's state of temper at the moment, he habitually adopted. Such cobwebs as duty towards, or consideration for, others, were entirely powerless to restrain the passions or caprices of his monstrous egotism.

"Yes," he said, speaking, as he had spoken throughout, in a muffled strange voice, and articulating indistinctly: "I am quite well, but I don't feel energetic by any means. I shall not ask you to stay to-night, prince; it would only bore you."

It was almost impossible to resist this hint, but Barletti caught a glance from Veronica which so plainly begged him to remain, that he answered: "Now, my good Gale, I won't hear that. Bore me! Not at all; I shall stay and chat until your bed-time. Or, if you prefer it, we'll have our partie of picquet. Which shall it be?"

Sir John was surprised at this unwonted insistence. The man had had his dinner; why did he wish to stay? That he evidently did wish it, was however no inducement to his host to yield.

"Frankly, my dear friend," said Sir John, making an odd grimace, as though he had tried to smile and failed: "I will to-night have neither chat nor cards. I decline your company! That is the charm of having an intimate friend; I know you won't be angry if I beg you to leave me to myself, or," he added, slowly turning his eyes on Veronica, "to miladi. That is myself; it's quite the same thing."

But in looking at Veronica, he surprised a glance of intelligence passing from her eyes to Barletti. Sir John could not change the direction of his own gaze

quickly enough to catch the answering look on the prince's face: his facial muscles appeared not to be under full command; but he saw an expression of irresolution and conflict in Barletti's whole bearing.

The prince rose, and then seated himself again, and then again rose with more determination and advanced to the side of the sofa holding out his hand to Sir John, and saying: "Good-night, then, caro Gale. Angry? No, of course I shall not be angry!" Then he bowed low to "miladi," and said in a low tone and with intention, "I regret to be banished from our good Gale, miladi: but I am sure he will be quite himself to-morrow. You need not—none of us need be uneasy about him."

"Uneasy!" echoed Sir John. "Que diable, Barletti—who is likely to be uneasy?"

And as he spoke, he looked not at the prince but at Veronica.

"Who indeed?" said Veronica, returning Barletti's parting salutation with the stateliest of bows. She was reassured at heart. For she argued thus: "If Barletti thought there were anything serious the matter, he would not have been restrained by any fear of Sir John from giving me a hint of it by word or look."

And the first faint dawn of a project rose dimly in her mind—a project of attaching and binding this man to her, so as to secure his assistance and protection if—anything should happen to Sir John. And already in the dawn of her project the prospect of that dread "something which might happen" showed a little less dreadful.

Meanwhile Sir John lay on the sofa watching her from under the shadow that covered his face, and thinking of the look he had surprised her giving Barletti. The look had put a new idea into his mind, a very unpleasant idea, not unpleasant merely because, if correct, it would argue some of the ideas he had hitherto entertained to have been wrong (though that contingency alone was disagreeable enough), but because, also, it would have the effect of making him uneasy in the future.

CHAPTER VII. WHAT THEY SAID AT THE CLUB.

PAUL had such a terrible time of it that night, in undressing Sir John and getting him to bed, that when he was alone in his own little room—within easy reach of his master's, and communicating with it by means of a large bell hanging at the head of his bed—he began to go over some calculations in his mind, with the half-formed intention of retiring from the baronet's

service with a thousand or so fewer francs than the sum he had determined on as the limit of his savings.

Sleep brought counsel to Paul, however, and he arose in the morning prepared to go through the term of service he had set himself. But whether sleep had brought counsel to Sir John or not, it is certain that he woke in a humour worse, if possible, than that in which he had gone to bed.

He did not feel so much recovered from the indisposition of yesterday as he had expected to feel. He was extremely feeble, except in temper; there, he was as vigorous and ferocious as a healthy tiger with a fine appetite and nothing to eat.

Paul attended on him silent and watchful.

At length he said, with grave deliberation: "You must have a physician, Sir John."

The reply was a volley of oaths, so fiercely uttered that they left the baronet panting and glaring breathlessly from his pillow.

"Excuse the liberty, Sir John," said Paul, with a shade more gravity, but otherwise quite unmoved, "but you must have a physician. You are a little feverish. It is nothing. A little draught will make you quite strong soon for your journey."

"A little draught," muttered Sir John, trying to mimic Paul's accent. "A little devil!"

"In this country fevers go quick. Excuse the liberty, Sir John. If you allow, I will go for a physician myself."

The man's steady persistence had some effect on his master. Sir John moved his head restlessly, and said, "Go? Where will you go? You don't know any of the doctors here, curse them!"

"There is a good and esteemed English physician, Sir John, lives in——"

"Damn the English physician! You infernal idiot, do you think I will have any of *them*, jabbering and boasting, and telling in the place that they have been attending Sir John Gale? Do you think I want a pack of British fools rushing up here to stare at me?"

"Bene, bene," said Paul. In his secret mind he had but a poor opinion of the English faculty, whose views, on the subject of bleeding especially, appeared to him to be terribly limited. "Benissimo! Better so, Sir John. I will fetch a most excellent medico. One who will cure you immediately—Dr. Maffei. He is well known, Sir John."

"Well known, you fool?"

"Well known among the Italians, Sir John," added Paul, astutely. "The signori Inglesi mostly employ their own physicians."

"Whatever he may say, I shall start for Naples on the nineteenth: remember that!"

In this way Sir John gave a tacit consent to the visit of the Italian doctor.

When that gentleman arrived at Villa Chiari he declared that there was no fever about Sir John. Paul had been mistaken there. But he let slip another ugly word, which Paul, who was present during the whole interview (acting as interpreter occasionally, for Sir John's Italian and the doctor's French sometimes came to a cul de sac, out of which Paul had to extricate them), smothered up as well as he could, in the hope that it might not reach Sir John's ears.

"I got a fall from my horse last year, and was badly hurt, and had a long illness in consequence," said Sir John, feeling that the phenomenon of so wealthy and important a personage as himself being reduced to a condition of great weakness needed some explanation: "I think it shook me more than they thought at the time. That's the only way I can account for being in such a devil of a state."

"Ah, yes. And then, you see, you are getting old, and you have probably been rather intemperate in your youth," answered Dr. Maffei, with disconcerting sincerity.

Sir John began to think he had been wrong in not having an English physician, if he must have any at all.

Dr. Maffei prescribed some medicine, and a plain, but nourishing diet.

"I am going to Naples on the nineteenth," said Sir John, brusquely.

"I do not know. I do not think I should advise your making a journey so soon."

"I shall not trouble you, sir, for your opinion on that point. I am going on that day. Good-morning."

The wild-beast temper had leaped out and shown its fangs so suddenly that the doctor's brown smooth-shaven face remained for a few seconds absolutely blank with amazement. Then he bowed silently; and, with a certain dignity, despite his short, stubby figure and ungraceful gait, walked out of the room.

An amazement of a livelier and more agreeable nature overspread his countenance when, driving down the hill in his fiacre, he inspected the bank-note which Paul had handed to him in an envelope. Its amount was more than ten times what

he would have considered a sufficient fee from any of his compatriots—it was, indeed, ostentatiously excessive. Sir John had some vaguely vindictive notion in his head that the beggarly Italian would repent not having been more civil to a man who could afford to pay such a fee. But he was wrong. The doctor was pondering upon the extraordinary and absurd constitution of an universe in which so anomalous a nation as the English was permitted to exist.

It would be difficult to decide whether or not the medicines sent by Dr. Maffei did the patient any good; but the fact was, that Sir John did not get worse, and was able to keep his resolution of going to Naples on the nineteenth of October.

Between the day of his tête-à-tête dinner with Veronica, and that date, Cesare de' Barletti had to undergo many buffetings of fortune. He was tossed backward and forward from sunshine to shade, by the selfish caprice of a little white hand—and these little white hands can strike hard sometimes. A man who has nothing to do from morning to night is glad of a habit which saves him the fatigue of deciding how he shall bestow himself at a given hour. He likes to say, "I *must* be with So-and-so this evening." It has a cheap air of duty. Thus mere habit had caused the Neapolitan princeling to be a regular visitor to the English baronet in the old days at Naples, when the latter was bound to his room by a fit of the gout.

The visits had been begun at the promptings of good-nature, combined with a natural taste for a superior cuisine. Sir John, at that time, employed a very accomplished cook.

Then in Florence it must be admitted that curiosity had been the chief spur which at first induced the prince to undergo the fatigue of sitting behind a cab-horse, and seeing him struggle up the steep road to Villa Chiari. He wanted to see the interior of the ménage, whose master and mistress seemed so ill-assorted. But very soon it began to appear to him a necessity of existence that he should pay his evening visit to the villa. He even found some satisfaction in his game of picquet. An Italian is usually amazingly patient of boredom: or, it may be, is unconscious of it, which is pleasanter for himself. Barletti admired Veronica extremely. And her presence was a strong attraction to him. By-and-bye it began to occur to him that it might be worth his while to pay his court to this beautiful woman, after a more serious fashion than he had at first

contemplated. Sir John was failing. He might die and leave a rich widow, who would become a prey to needy fortune-hunters: to fortune-hunters who would not have the same advantages to offer in exchange for wealth, as could be found in an alliance with Cesare dei Principi Barletti! It would be a pity to see her sacrificed to such men as he had seen and known engaged in the chase after a wife with money. He made no definite plan, but suffered himself to drift on lazily, with just so much intention as sufficed to modify his behaviour in many subtle, nameless ways. But after the incident of Sir John's indisposition, there arose a different feeling in his breast towards her.

Barletti really had a fund of kindness in him. He was becoming fond—with a fondness truer and more tender than that inspired by the fine contrast of diamonds on a satin skin—of this girl, so young, so beautiful, and so lonely! From the moment when she had appealed to him in some sort for advice and support, a fibre of manhood was stirred in him on her behalf. He would have even made some kind of active sacrifice for her. So, despite Sir John's irritability and insolence, Barletti continued to endure seeing his cab-horse toil up the hill overhanging the Ema, evening after evening.

And Sir John Gale did not scruple to make use of Barletti. He would give him little commissions to execute in the city, and expected him to read up the news of the day and retail the gossip of the hour for his amusement.

One afternoon, in search of this latter commodity, Barletti was standing at the door of the club with a knot of others.

"I remember him at Rome," said a portly man with dyed whiskers, continuing a desultory conversation with Barletti. "A red-haired man who hunted. Quite the type of an Englishman."

"That's a mistake you all make," observed a languid, spindle-legged young nobleman with a retreating chin. "I believe there are as many red-haired people in Italy as in England."

The spindle-legged young nobleman had married an English wife, and had been in England, and spoke with authority.

"No, no, it's the Irish that have red hair!" exclaimed a third. "Or the Scotch. I forget which."

"Zitto!" whispered the first portly speaker, as a tall old man appeared at the club door, "the captain won't hear you assert that the Irish have red hair!"

The captain was a half-pay officer who played an uncommonly good game at billiards. He was understood to live chiefly by his wits, but he had the entrée to several distinguished families who clung—theoretically, for a more practical clinging would have involved an amount of inconvenience which it would have been mere Quixotism to encounter—to the old régime; he was a zealous Roman Catholic, and, it is scarcely necessary to add, was descended from one of the ancient kings of Ireland!

"Who has red hair?" asked the captain, in Italian flavoured with a rich Kerry brogue.

"We were talking about a man I know here, un riccone, an immensely rich fellow," said Barletti.

"Indeed! Who is he?" said the captain, affably. He had no constitutional prejudice against rich fellows.

"Baron Gale."

"Baron *what*? I never heard the title."

"He is an English baron—Sir John Gale—I knew him in Naples."

"O, a baronet! Per Bacco!" exclaimed the captain, pronouncing the name of the heathen deity precisely like the last syllable of "tobacco," with a very sharp a. "It isn't Tallis Gale, is it?"

"No, no; John: Sir John Gale."

"Aye, aye, that is the baptismal name. But he took the name of Gale when he came into a fortune, being richer than enough already, that's always the way. He's a thin, high-shouldered man, with sandy hair and black eyes?"

"Già."

"And has a handsome wife?"

"Bellissima!"

"*That's* the man!" cried the captain, rolling the end of his cigar between his lips relishingly. "I knew him in Ireland in the year 'forty-nine. My lady is a great beauty—*was*, that is, for she must be quite *passée* by this time—and married him for his money."

"*Passée*!" echoed Barletti, on whom that word alone, of all that the captain had uttered, had made an impression. "Diamine! What do you call '*passée*'? She is as fresh as a Hebe, and young enough to be his daughter!"

"Pooh, pooh, my dear friend! There's some mistake. Lady Tallis Gale must be fifty if she's a day!"

The bystanders burst into a derisive laugh. Barletti had allowed himself to boast a little of his intimacy at Villa Chiari, and had exalted "*miladi's*" beauty to the skies. It is naturally agreeable to find that one's friend has been exaggerating the charms of a

society from which one is oneself excluded. Barletti had to undergo a great deal of banter: and many pleasantries were uttered on the humorous topic of Lady Gale's supposed age and infirmities: which pleasantries being (like some other things which are grateful to the truly genteel palate, as caviare and old Stilton) of a somewhat high flavour, we may be dispensed from laying before the reader.

Barletti fumed and protested and gesticulated, in vain. The joke at his expense was too good to be lost.

"That's why she never showed, then, in the Cascine or anywhere," said he of the spindle legs, reflectively. That young nobleman was not, strictly speaking, imaginative, and had taken little part in the shower of jests which had been flung at Barletti. "I *thought* it was queer, if she was so handsome as all that!"

The conception of a strikingly handsome young woman who did *not* want to show herself in the Cascine, was entirely beyond this young gentleman's powers of mind. He was as incredulous as an African to whom one should describe a snow-storm.

That evening Barletti, seated at the picquet-table opposite to Sir John Gale, caused the latter to dash his cards down with an oath, by asking him a simple question: "Have you been married twice, caro Gale?"

"What the devil's that to you, sir?" demanded the baronet when he had recovered breath enough to speak.

Barletti drew himself up a little. "Pardon, monsieur le baron," said he, "but I do not quite understand that mode of address."

At another moment he might have passed over the brutal rudeness of his host's words, but his amour propre was still smarting from the jeering he had received in the morning. He was therefore ready to resent a small offence from one from whom he had endured greater offences with equanimity. That was not just. But man often deals as blindly with his fellows as fortune deals with him: and it is the first comer who receives the good or evil he may chance to hold in his hand, quite irrespective of the claims of abstract justice.

Sir John was not in a mood to take any notice of Barletti's sudden access of dignity.

"What put that into your head, pray?" asked Sir John, fiercely.

"No matter, monsieur le baron; if I could have conjectured that the topic was a painful one, I should not have adverted to it. Let us say no more."

"Trash, sir! I insist upon knowing what you mean."

Barletti had resolved not to be bullied further, and had raised his head confronting Sir John with a proud air, when he caught a glimpse through the glass door, of a graceful figure with long sweeping skirts, passing slowly along the loggia. It was yet early. They had not dined. Although the card-table was illumined by a lamp, the daylight was not excluded, and the loggia with part of the garden were distinctly visible from the interior of the room. Veronica was pacing along with her head bent down in a pensive attitude. As she came opposite to the window, she raised her head for a moment and looked in.

Sir John had his back to the window; but Barletti could see her. She looked full at him, and he saw, or seemed to see, something plaintively appealing in her eyes. It all passed so quickly that there appeared to be scarcely any pause between Sir John's last words and Barletti's reply, uttered coldly, but not angrily.

"Insist," caro Gale, is an absurd word to use. But if you really wish it, I have no objection to tell you what made me ask if you had been twice married. It is no secret. Your name was mentioned at the club to-day, and a man declared that he had known miladi years ago, and that she was—not quite young now. I thought it might have been a former wife of whom he spoke. He said, by-the-bye, that you had another name besides Gale—Salli—Talli—I forget it now."

Sir John laughed a little grating laugh. "Well," said he, taking up his cards again and arranging them in his hand: "I suppose you can judge for yourself about the correctness of your friend's information on one point at least. Miladi would be much obliged to him if she could know that he said she was 'not quite young.' Ha, ha! I suppose the fellow was trying to hoax you. By-the-bye, I would advise you, if you want to be in miladi's good books, not to tell her that you have been discussing her at the club. She's so devilish proud that she'd never forgive you. Allons, let us finish our game."

Barletti understood very well that he had got no answer to his question. But he was too glad to have avoided a quarrel with Sir John to care about that. And he was more glad than ever that he had commanded himself, when Veronica entered and sat a little behind Sir John's chair, talking little and smiling less, but gentle, amiable, and looking exquisitely beautiful.

All through dinner her unwonted softness of mood continued. She had lately,

as has been hinted, displayed a good deal of caprice and hauteur in her behaviour to Barletti: so that her mildness was made precious by contrast. It was the last evening he was to spend at Villa Chiari. On the following day Sir John had decided to start for Naples.

"Good-bye, prince," said Veronica, giving him her hand. It was the first time she had ever done so; and Barletti's heart beat suddenly faster, as he clasped her fingers for a moment in his own.

"We shall see you in the winter?" added Veronica.

"I hope I shall be able to get away. I came here, thinking I should stay perhaps a fortnight, on some business for Alberto" (Alberto was his elder brother, and the head of the family), "and these tiresome lawyers have kept me broiling in Florence throughout the whole summer. Pazienza! I do not regret my detention," he added, a little awkwardly, as he bowed once more to "miladi."

Then he went away through the garden, past the broken fountain, and out at the wide gates. There his fiacre was awaiting him. But he told the man to drive on slowly, and stay for him at the foot of the hill. And after standing for a few minutes gazing at the old house, white in the moonlight, black in the shadow, he absolutely walked more than three-quarters of a mile down the hill, under the autumn sky spangled with stars: walked through the thick, soft dust which speedily covered his well-varnished boots with a drab-coloured coating. And even when he reached the foot of the descent, he had not yet exhausted the excitement, which made it irksome for him to sit still in a carriage. He paid the coachman and dismissed him, and tramped home through the streets on foot.

All which might have proved to a discerning eye, that Cesare dei Principi Barletti was feeling powerful and unwonted emotion.

AS THE CROW FLIES.

HARROGATE TO BERWICK. FINAL ROOST.

THE crow bears on from Whitby to Harrogate, in the last century the northern rival of Bath, and a *dépôt* of gay invalids and the testy fathers of old comedy. This bare common, once part of Knaresborough Forest, was in Elizabeth's time stripped of most of its timber by the iron smelters. The first chalybeate spring (the earliest, indeed, discovered in England), was analysed by Sir William Slingby in 1596.

Even before the Restoration the Harrogate waters had become famous for curing sick people. The company began to gather there and lodging-houses sprang up, but it was not till 1687 that the first public-house, on the site of the present "Queen," was built. Smollet came to Harrogate; he was indeed fond of Yorkshire, and, as the crow would remind his readers, has fixed on Scarborough as the place where Humphrey Clinker dragged out by the ear his choleric master whom he fancied to be drowning. Smellfungus, as Sterne calls Smollet, who travelled "from Dan to Beer-sheba," and declared all to be barren, described the fashionable resort of Yorkshire as "a wild common, bare and bleak, without tree or shrub, or the slightest signs of cultivation." Worthy but testy Matthew Bramble (a type of Smollet himself), sketches the frugal and simple-hearted life then prevailing at the paradise of invalids. The company mostly lodged at four separate inns scattered over the bleak common, and went every morning to the well in their own carriages. From eight o'clock till eleven there was a table-d'hôte breakfast at each of the inns. The company drank tea in the afternoon, and played cards or danced in the evening. One custom Smollet much condemned. The ladies were obliged to treat the guests with tea alternately, and even girls of sixteen were not exempted from this shameful imposition. There was a public subscription ball every night at one or other of the inns, and the company from the other houses were admitted by tickets.

And now the crow darts forward to the northern frontier of Yorkshire, and singles out Rokeby—Scott's Rokeby—for his prey. Scott visited his friend Morritt there in 1809. Writing to Ellis, the poet expatiates on the beautiful scenery, especially at the junction of those swift and beautiful rivers, the Greta and the Tees, in a glen not unlike Roslin. "Rokeby is," he writes, "one of the most enviable places I have ever seen, as it unites the richness and luxuriance of English vegetation with the romantic variety of glen, torrent, and copse which dignify our northern scenery." The poem was written in 1812, during all the confusion of Scott's "flitting" from Ashestiel to Abbotsford. The descriptions are singularly faithful, and form an eternal guide-book to the place. The poet has sketched the Tees near Eggleston Abbey, where it flows over broad smooth beds of grey marble, and Mortham Tower, which is haunted by the ghost of a headless lady. The junction of

the Tees and Greta has been both drawn by Turner and described by Scott.

The scene of Bertram's interview with Guy Denzil is the glen called "Brignall Banks," below Scargill; the robbers' cave, hard by, is still shown, quarried in the flagstone, and Mr. Morritt tells us that he observed Scott noting with extreme care the plants (the throatwort, thyme, &c.) that grew round the spot. The woods and scaurs of Rokeby are the scene of the old mock-romance (fifteenth century) of "the Hunting of the Felon Sowe of Rokeby," by the blundering and not too-brave friars of Richmond:

She was more than other three
The grisliest beast that ere might be—
Her head was great and grey.
She was bred in Rokeby Wood;
There were few that thither good
That came alive away.

And now far into Northumberland the crow strikes, where from Brislee Tower he sees beyond the vale of Whittingham the blue cones of the Cheviots (twenty miles distant), and through their blue ravines glimpses of the Teviots. Then the crow swoops down on Alnwick, which stands square and defiant, like a thing of yesterday, on the gentle slope shelving to the Alne. Pure and smooth looks the moor-stone in its battlements, and yet the castle has stood the buffets of centuries, and has been battered by Scotch cannon and crimsoned with Scotch blood; rebel powder has often blackened it, and military engines have stormed at it. It was built by Eustace Fitzjohn, a friend of Henry the First, and an adherent of the Empress Maud, who surrendered his new-built fortress to the Scotch king to hold against Stephen. This same staunch partisan, Eustace, was eventually shot through by an arrow at the siege of Barnard Castle. Alnwick was through all the centuries a resting-place for kings. John came here, and angered the northern barons by his licentious insolence; and, in their turns, Edward the Third, Henry the Fourth, and Queen Margaret, and Edward the Fourth. Several of these monarchs, indeed, earned their lodging by first capturing the castle, which has a special Shakespearcan interest from its connexion with the chivalrous Hotspur. A part of the castle between the tower, called "Hotspur's Chair," and that called the Record Tower, goes by the name of the Bloody Gap, from a breach through which the savage Scots once hotly entered, and were as hotly driven back. A mere record of the Earls of Northumberland is

an epitome of English history. The first lord of Alnwick was a knight of great prowess in Gascony and Scotland; his son Henry fought bravely at Halidon Hill and Sluys, and captured King David of Scotland. The fourth Lord Marshal of England was a favourer of Wickliff, and, banished by Richard the Second, returned to die on Bromham Moor. Hotspur fell in Hatley Field, his father died in the battle of Taunton, and his son was slain at St. Albans. The fourth earl was murdered by a mob. The seventh earl aided the great rising in the north, and was executed. The eighth earl, the lover of Mary Queen of Scots, was beheaded in the Tower.

Some curious feudal customs still prevail under the shadow of the duke's castle. At the July fair, four men from different townships form a watch, and patrol from dusk till midnight. This service, exempting the townships from toll, preserves the remembrance of the annual Scottish inroad made at fair time in old days. On the evening of St. Mark's day freemen are admitted. The candidates, armed with swords, ride on horseback (it was quite necessary to go armed at Alnwick in the moss-trooper days), and at the market-place the cavalcade is joined by the chamberlains and duke's bailiffs. A band then heads the procession to the Freemen's Hill (four miles distant), where the candidates, dismounting, and putting on white dresses and white caps trimmed with ribbons, struggle ignominiously through a dirty, stagnant pool, twenty yards long. Holly-trees are then planted at the doors of the new freemen, as a signal for their friends to assemble and offer them congratulations at a bean feast.

From Alnwick the crow darts to Berwick, his last roosting-place, before he turns to his final roost on the old black dome that the golden gallery coronets so proudly. He alights on the old wall of Berwick (the town of the Bernicians), which has stood as much shot from both English and Scotch cannon as any town on the blood-stained Border. This town beside the debatable river was always being burnt or pillaged. When the Yorkshire barons went to Melrose and did fealty to King Alexander of Scotland (a boy of fifteen), as the Northumberland barons had done previously at Felton, King John, in rage and fury, stormed and burnt Berwick, setting fire with his own hand to the very house where he had lodged. He and his foreign mercenaries, Frenchmen and Brabançons, tortured many of the inhabi-

tants, hanging them up by their hands and feet till they groaningly disclosed where they had hidden their money. Then the Scots snatched it again till Edward the First, after coming here to discuss the claims of Bruce and Baliol, took it by storm some years after. The king on this occasion encamped on the declivity at the foot of the east end of Halidon Hill, in full view of the castle and town. His own quarters were fixed at the nunnery. His fleet venturing a rash attack, three ships ran aground and were burnt by the enemy. Edward, enraged at this, attacked the town, and, forcing the rude barricades of boards, took the place by the first coup de main. Thirty Flemish merchants held the Red Hill Tower till the evening, but were then destroyed by fire. Edward's soldiers, it is said, slew seven thousand Scotchmen in this attack, and, as Boethius says, the mills were turned with blood instead of water. The women and the garrison of two hundred men were sent back into Scotland, and Douglas remained a prisoner till the end of the war. King Edward stopped at Berwick fifteen days, and, to protect the place against the warlike Scotch, ordered a vast ditch, eighty feet broad and forty deep, to be dug through the neck of land between the sea and the Tweed. But the Scotch soon swarmed back again to Berwick; and when Wallace had slain the hated Cressingham, flayed him and cut his skin into stirrup-leathers, he took Berwick, the stone wall not being yet finished. But the English found it deserted on their advance. Robert Bruce next took it by escalade, being aided by a burgess of the town: Randolph and Douglas were the first to climb over the ramparts at a part near Cowgate.

A few years later brave Wallace was executed at Smithfield, and half his body sent to Berwick to be hung upon the bridge; while the wretched Countess of Buchan, who had crowned Robert Bruce at Seone, was shut up in a wooden cage, and hung like a blackbird outside one of Berwick Castle towers; after Edward had assembled here his Bannockburn army, Bruce, however, took the place again, which Edward the Second soon attacked in force. The English fastened boats full of men to the masts of their vessels, hoping to throw bridges on to the ramparts, but the assailants were driven off. They then tried a sow (a covered battering ram), but the Scotch split the roof with stones from their military engines, and with cranes let down burning timbers upon it and finally destroyed it.

When the English archers scuttled from the shattered sow, the Scotch cried, scoffingly, "The sow has littered." The siege was raised at the end of about fourteen days.

Edward Baliol eventually ceded Berwick to England in 1334; but in 1377, one of the most daring forays ever made into England led to the capture of the town by eight brave Scotch borderers, who killed the constable, Sir Robert Boynton, and only allowed his wife and family to depart, after exacting a ransom of two thousand marks sterling, to be paid within three weeks.

Eventually, besieged by the Earl of Northumberland, forty-eight Scotchmen held Berwick for eight days against seven thousand English archers, three thousand horse, two earls, and three lords. On the ninth day the place was taken, and all but the Scotch leader, the brave Sir John Gordon, were slain in the assault, in which Shakespeare's Hotspur displayed great courage. After Edward the Fourth took the place, however, it ever afterwards remained English, and on the accession of James the First the garrison was finally reduced.

From the highest stone of the Berwick Bell Tower, where blazing beacons have been so often lit to warn Northumberland that the blue bonnets were over the border, the crow now, with swiftest flaps of his sable wings, darts straight as an arrow back to his airy home on the great black dome that, rising gigantic above the wreathing smoke of London, resembles a huge witch's caldron seething with wizards' spells both of good and evil influence.

NATURE'S FIVE LESSONS.

LESSON I.

Two years to build a house? The mushroom's roof
In one night rises,
And surprises
The shepherd lout ere crushed beneath his hoof.

LESSON II.

Ten years to work one room of tapestry?
The rose's shoot
Has grown a foot
Since last night's rain. O Nature's majesty!

LESSON III.

Three years to fix on canvas a dead saint?
Careless to-day,
Thro' earth made way
That snowdrop; dullard, learn from it to subtly paint.

LESSON IV.

Poor prodigal! you toss your gold in showers away?
The Autumn tree,
As recklessly,
Flings all its leaves, but *they* return in May.

LESSON V.

Kind Nature keeps for all of us a gentle school.
Even the wise,
Through it may rise
Still wiser. Sorrow and Death alone can teach the fool.

PRETENDERS.

THE world is full of pretenders. We are all pretenders, more or less. But it is not of such pretenders as these that I write—nor of real pretenders to thrones, which they or their ancestors have rightfully or wrongfully forfeited; but of the sham pretenders to great historical names, that in all ages, and in all countries, start up, whenever a great heritage is mysteriously vacant, or an ancient family has no accredited representative. Do these pretenders in any case believe in their own claims? Or are they all swindlers and adventurers? For instance, did all or any of the half dozen people, French, German, American, and English, who within the last sixty or seventy years have pretended to be Louis the Seventeenth, the poor child who perished in prison under the brutal treatment of the cobbler who had charge of him, really believe himself to be what he asserted? Were they all impostors—Augustus Moves in England, the Reverend Eleazar Wright in America, and all the rest of them—impostors knowing themselves to be such? Or did one or more act upon the honest conviction that he really was the person he represented himself to be? Did all the handsome young fellows in Highland garb, assuming to be lincal and legitimate descendants of King James the Second of England and Seventh of Scotland, believe in their royal pedigree; or did they play the part to get money out of it and gain consideration by it; or out of the love of hoaxing; or because in life they really knew no other part they could play so well? Without venturing to assert that not one of the many claimants to be the real Louis the Seventeenth, or the legitimate representative of Prince Charles Edward Stuart, may have been a true man, it may without want of kindly charity be admitted, that those among them who were not rogues must have been more or less fools: in other words crazy. Perhaps this is the simple explanation of the fact that so many of such characters have appeared. Madness often takes this form.

It happened that five or six years ago, I made the acquaintance of a re-

markable old gentleman, or rather, the remarkable old gentleman made my acquaintance, and confided to me the secret of his birth, parentage, education, and very modest pretensions. He was a very high personage, according to his story; but did not aim at high fortune, or at anything, in fact, except to be let alone. I was at the time temporarily resident in a great and populous city of the New World, which its inhabitants call Gotham, and which I shall call Gotham here. What took me to Gotham I need not tell. Suffice it to say that I was very well known in the city, and had the annoyance, perhaps if all the truth were known, it was the honour, of being often and very unjustly attacked in the columns of more than one of the Gothamite journals. In short I was for the time being the best abused Englishman in Gotham; and my name and business were familiar to thousands of people of whom I knew nothing, nor cared to know anything. It was a hot, a very hot, day in July, when there walked into my office, entirely unannounced, a venerable gentleman with long white hair, and a countenance so full of dignity and nobility of expression, that it would have excited attention anywhere. He was very careful to shut the door behind him, and seeing a young man in the room with me, he asked (looking very suspiciously around him) whether he could speak to me in private? It was a time when men's political passions were violently excited, and it especially behoved me to be on my guard, lest the Gothamite journals in their attacks on me with pen and ink, should inspire some lunatic, or some ruffian, with the happy idea of attacking me with a revolver. But this man was so old and so pleasant looking, that I had no other fear of him than that he had come to wheedle some dollars from my pocket. So I led him into my inner sanctum, and asked him to sit down, and tell me his name and business. He sat down, but not before making sure that the door was closed. I could not help gazing at him rather more earnestly than was quite consistent with good manners, by reason of his striking resemblance to the statue of Charles the Second in Edinburgh, which had long been familiar to my memory, and of the very picturesque character of his noble head and forehead. He was clad in a suit of home-spun blue; wore very thick-soled shoes, that did not appear to have been blackened for many a day; and had economically turned up the ends of his

trousers, to prevent their contact with the mud. He carried a serviceable blackthorn stick in his hard right hand: a hand that bore the undoubted marks of manual drudgery; he had a gold chain of antique fashion, hanging from the antique fob, now so seldom seen: and had altogether the air of a well-to-do farmer in a rough country, where people are accustomed to hard work, and are not particularly nice, either in dress or manners.

"My name," he said, "is of no consequence. My real name I do not care to call myself by—there's danger in it; but I am known to my neighbours as Mr. —" (let us say Blank).

"Well, Mr. Blank, is there anything I can do for you?"

"Much," he replied; "but I must warn you, that to do me a service is to incur danger, very great danger; and you shall not incur it, until you know who I am. Shall I tell you? Or are you afraid?"

"You may tell me; and I am not afraid," I replied, beginning to feel additional interest in my mysterious visitor.

"I will go right into the matter at once," he said. "Look at me. I am the son of Charles Edward Stuart, who was lawful King of England, Scotland, and Ireland, and was commonly and unjustly called the Pretender: a man who never pretended to be what he was not, or to the possession of anything but his own."

I certainly did start when Mr. Blank uttered these words; even if I did not rub my eyes to be quite certain that I was not asleep and dreaming. Being quite certain that I was awake, I looked incredulous, and replied:

"Surely, Mr. Blank, you cannot be the son of a man who died nearly eighty years ago?"

"Why not?" he inquired. "Besides, it is not nearly so long ago that my father died!"

"He died," I rejoined, "somewhere about the year 1788, being then, if my memory does not deceive me, about sixty-eight years of age. He was born, I think, in 1720?"

"He was," replied Mr. Blank; "you are quite right as to his birth: quite wrong as to his death. The truth is, he was the object of such persistent and cold-blooded persecution on the part of the British government, that a false story of his death was circulated in 1788; and he emigrated to the New World, in order to pass in peace the remainder (Mr. Blank, being an

American, said, 'the *balance*') of such days as it might please Heaven to allot to him. He settled in the rude and thinly-peopled region of Western New York, on the slope of the Adirondack Mountains, and purchased a farm which I now occupy. Shall I go on with my story?"

"By all means!"

"He was a hale and hearty man at that time, and remained hale and hearty for many years afterwards; so hale and hearty, that in the year 1798, being then turned seventy-eight, and having lived in America ten years, he married a young woman of Scottish extraction; not very young (she was two-and-thirty at the time), and very beautiful. That marriage was a happy one. Three children, of whom I am the sole survivor, were born to my father before he died. He kept his secret. Even his wife did not know who he was, except that his real name was Stuart."

"And how did you come to know it, Mr. Stuart?"—correcting myself, I said, "Mr. Blank?"

"By my father's will, bequeathing to me certain documents, in which I found all the proofs of the story I have told you."

"A very extraordinary story," said I.

"But not so extraordinary as true," added he, very sharply and peremptorily.

"Do the documents exist?"

"They do."

"Will you show them to me?"

"Upon conditions," said he, very slowly; "if your courage does not fail you when you know what the conditions are."

"Before we go further," said I, "will you tell me for what reason you have chosen me to be your confidant?"

"Because I am persecuted by the British government, as my father was before me. Because I have no joy in my life. Because I am beset by spies. Because I go in danger of poison, or a shot from a revolver. Because I think that you have the means of causing all this persecution to cease."

"I? Really, Mr. Stuart, you overrate my importance. Supposing this persecution to be real, and not imaginary, I have no more power to help you than the man in the moon has. You say you have documents to prove your case. If so, I can only express my firm belief that if your documents be genuine, you have only to bring them under the notice of the British government, and that government, if persuaded that you are what you represent yourself to be, and as your documents, you say, will prove, will not only cease to

persecute you—if ever they did persecute you—but, in consideration of your being the heir and representative of Charles Edward Stuart, will settle on you a very handsome pension."

The old gentleman shook his head. "I don't want a pension; I have a farm of my own, and am quite independent of any man's favour, or the favour of any government. I want nothing but to be let alone. Let me drink and eat without fear of poison. Let me turn a corner without risk of a pistol or a bludgeon. Let me sink down into the common herd of common men, and be at peace. That is all I ask. I want no pension, no money, no recognition, no anything from anybody. Peace, and peace alone. That is all. And to you, sir," he added, suddenly, "I owe an apology for having intruded upon you. It will be known in a week to the court and government of Queen Victoria that you have received and spoken to me. You will be a marked man, sir, depend upon it, unless you go forthwith and denounce me. You may denounce me if you like. I give you full and free permission."

"That would be gross treachery, Mr. Stuart," replied I, "and I shall not denounce you. But if you have in your possession the documents you speak of, I should be glad to see them."

"You shall see them this day week," he said, "and without fail. Mind, I want nothing but to prove to you that I am what I say I am; and that when convinced of the fact, you will exercise your influence with the British government to have me left in peace. You are about to say that you have no influence? I have my own opinions on that subject. You can say for me what I cannot say for myself:—that I am no traitor, no intriguer, nothing but a poor, forlorn, last remnant of a once royal and powerful race, who asks nothing but a grave; and a quiet journey towards it."

Mr. Blank, true to his appointment, brought me the documents on the day he had fixed. The principal one was a certificate of marriage—it appeared to me duly signed and in all respects authentic—between Mr. Charles Edward Stuart of the state of New York, and a certain lady of the same state, dated in October, 1798. Next to this was the certificate of baptism of Charles Edward Stuart, dated November, 1799; a third document purported to be a licence from the state of New York, to Mr. Stuart, granting him, on payment of certain fees, the permission to be thenceforward known as Mr.

Blank. There was nothing further of any consequence.

I suppose I looked dissatisfied. At all events, I said to Mr. Stuart, that I had no doubt his father was married at the time specified, and that his name was Charles Edward Stuart.

"Well?" he inquired, somewhat triumphantly.

"Well," I replied, not at all triumphantly, "but what of that? I myself have known two people named Charles Edward Stuart, and neither of them claimed descent from the royal family on that account."

"Of course not," said Mr. Blank, "they would have been impostors if they had, because they would have usurped a position that belongs to me only. There may be a thousand Charles Edward Stuarts in the world, for that matter; but there is only one of them the descendant of kings, and that is the man who stands before you."

"But Mr. Stuart, or Mr. Blank," I replied, "there is one link wanting in your golden chain, and that is a very important one. The link which proves your father to be the son of James the Second, so called; the man who fought and lost the battle of Culloden."

"Incredulous as St. Thomas!" he exclaimed; and then folding up his papers suddenly, and putting them carefully into an old and well-worn pocket-book, he added: "I have lost my time, and you have lost yours! I beg pardon for having intruded myself upon you. You are well quit of me. Had you believed my claim, and had you taken any steps in my behalf with the usurping government of the descendants of the 'wee, wee German lairdie' that came from Hanover to sit in the seat of better men than himself, you might have been a ruined, and you certainly would have been a marked, man. You have had a narrow escape. Good-morning!"

He was gone before I could say a word to detain him. When I went to the door to make an effort to bring him back and put him in a better humour, I heard his heavy step on the stairs, and the clump of his thick cudgel as he descended. I never saw or heard of him more.

I have often wondered what put the notion into this old gentleman's head: whether he were crazed on that score, and on no other: and whether his undoubted resemblance to the published portraits of Charles the Second, and the remarkable profile on the crown pieces of that reign, added to the strange coincidence afforded by his name, first gave him the idea, which

was to colour the whole course of his life, and infuse the little drop of poisonous gall into a cup of experience, that might otherwise have been sweet. I think he believed his own story. And it is just possible that as much may be said for a great many other pretenders of past and present times, who have gone through life burdened with a heavy delusion, and meaning no harm.

SMOKING IN FRANCE.

It was Sir Walter Raleigh who first introduced tobacco into England; it was Jean Nicot, ambassador of Charles the Ninth at the court of Lisbon, who conferred the like benefit upon France.

What would have been the feelings of the Cardinal of Lorraine, at that time Prime Minister, had this same Nicot appeared with the wondrous plant in his hand, and spoken to his Eminence as follows:

"My lord, the finances of this realm are no doubt, as usual, in a right meagre condition. I have come to propose to your Eminence the creation of a new tax, which, without any sort of oppression, without arousing the least complaint, will in due time pour into the king's coffers something like a hundred and fifty million francs a year. The tax will be quite voluntary; no one will be compelled to pay it, and yet nine men out of ten at least will contribute to it cheerfully."

"Let us hear your proposal."

"Here it is, my lord. I would suggest that the Crown should reserve to itself the exclusive privilege of selling a certain herb which his Majesty's subjects might reduce to powder and stuff into their nostrils. Those who preferred it might cut up the plant into leaves and chew it, or better still, burn it and inhale the smoke."

If the prelate had listened thus far, it is probable he would have exclaimed:

"Your herb is then a perfume more fragrant than amber, than rose, or than musk?"

"On the contrary, your Eminence," would have answered Nicot, "it smells rather ill."

"And how many idiots and imbeciles do you conceive there will be, then, to poke this bad-smelling herb up their noses?"

"There will be, some day, more than twenty millions in this realm alone, my lord."

If there be not yet in France quite so many as twenty million men who smoke or take snuff, the number does not fall far short of it. The imperial manufactories sold, within the year 1867, no less than two hundred and forty-eight million six hundred and fifty-two thousand francs (nine million fifty-three thousand nine hundred and twenty pounds) worth of tobacco under various forms. And the net profit which accrued to the revenue from this colossal sale was one hundred and seventy-seven million seven hundred and fifty-two thousand four hundred and thirty-five francs—that is, seven million one hundred and ten thousand and ninety-seven pounds, eight shillings.

In these days, every man who has not a few thousand acres of his own is more or less an advocate of free trade, and, consequently, ninety-nine men out of a hundred are strongly opposed to monopolies. Still, without being a renegade to the just principles of commercial freedom, one may be allowed to profess that there is no rule, however good, but should be suffered to have exceptions. Postal monopoly and telegraph monopoly are admitted to be necessities. A government monopoly of tobacco, if not defensible on the same ground as postal and telegraph monopoly, has, nevertheless, led in France to the good result that France is the only country in the world where, for a moderate price, an ordinary man can be sure of a pipe of good tobacco or an unadulterated cigar.

Tobacco, like every other human institution, has its detractors; and a French statistician of more ingeniousness than good sense has endeavoured to prove by the help of figures that the increase in the number of lunatics in France keeps exact pace with the increase in the number of smokers. "In 1538," he says, "the profit made by the State upon the sale of tobacco was thirty millions of francs, and there were ten thousand madmen in the land; in 1542 the profits had risen to eighty millions of francs, and the number of madmen to fifteen thousand; ten years later, we find one hundred and twenty millions of profit and twenty-two thousand madmen; while in 1562 there were no less than forty-four thousand madmen, to set off against a profit of one hundred and eighty millions of francs.

A few words will refute this mode of drawing conclusions. From the forty-four thousand insane must be deducted the women, who form forty-seven per cent (almost half) of the total; moreover, within the last thirty years the hideous plague of drunkenness, from which the French had formerly been almost exempt, has made rapid strides in France. The excitable people of the South, living in an ardent climate, quite unfit for the abuse of spirituous liquors, have of late years discarded the light red wines of Bordeaux and Burgundy, and taken to brandy, gin, beer, and, worst of all, to absinthe. Here lies the real secret of the rise in the number of madmen. Four-fifths of the lunatics of France are natives of Gascony, Languedoc, Auvergne, the Dauphiné, and Guienne; of the rest, those whose lunacy is not congenital have almost all gone mad under the distracting effects of the whirlwind life of gambling, drinking, and enervating debauchery, of which Paris has become the hot-bed.

It is useless to dwell upon the other argument of anti-tobaccoists, that there is enough nicotine in every pure cigar to kill a man outright. By the same process of reasoning we might say that in half a pound of almonds there is sufficient prussic acid to destroy a troop of soldiers; and that with the saffron that could be extracted from six bath buns, a whole nursery full of children might be sent to their graves. It is one thing to swallow the dis-

tilled quintessence of a substance containing a small quantity of poison; and it is another to take that poison mixed up with certain matters which counteract its effects and absorb its noxious properties. The moderate use of good tobacco involves no danger. On the contrary, in cases of nervous excitement, it is excellent as a sedative; it is excellent, also, as a remedy for sleeplessness; and its soothing qualities render it an invaluable solace for men who, like authors and painters, live in a state of constant mental excitement.

The Sultan, Amurath the Fourth, who condemned snuff-takers to death; the Shah of Persia, Abbas, who cut off their noses; Innocent the Eighth, who doomed them to hell-fire; and James the First, who wrote an absurd book against them; were all equally in the wrong. The remarks that apply to smokers apply to those who take snuff. Our grandfathers took snuff every day of their lives from twenty to ninety, without being the worse for it. All the great men of the last century indulged in this harmless—though, it must be owned, dirty—habit. Napoleon the First, not to have the trouble of opening a snuff-box every five minutes, used, when out campaigning, to keep both waistcoat pockets continually filled with a pet mixture of his own. To those who still maintain, in the face of such facts, that tobacco is hurtful, we have only to answer, as Voltaire answered, when after taking coffee all his life, he was told at seventy that the beverage was a poison: "Perhaps," he said; "but in that case a very slow one."

But the *sine qua non* condition in the use of tobacco is that the tobacco must be good; here we come back to the point whence we started—the immense benefit the French enjoy in smoking no worse tobacco than such as is prepared in the government manufactories under special supervision, and is offered for sale with the State mark.

It was in the year 1811, under the reign of Napoleon, that the French government first took the monopoly of tobacco. Previous to that date, the French smokers possessing but moderate means had fared as ill as those of England and the United States do to this day. But one night, at a ball at the Tuileries, the Emperor noticed a lady who was covered with diamonds. He asked his chamberlain who she was. On being told that her husband was a tobacco merchant who had made a colossal fortune within a few years, he at once suspected that a fortune built up so rapidly could have no very honest foundation. Ten months afterwards he signed, in his usual arbitrary way, a decree which secured to the State the exclusive right of fabricating and selling tobacco. The monopoly has been renewed since, every ten years, by successive legislative bodies. The present monopoly does not expire until the 1st of January, 1873, before which time, however, it will doubtless be renewed. From the 1st of July, 1811, to the 31st of December, 1867, the gross receipts of the "Régie," or Government Tobacco Establishment, were nearly two hundred and fifty-six million pounds English; the

expenses were about eighty million; the net profits about one hundred and eighty million.

The Government has every interest to see that what it sells should be of good quality, in order, firstly, that the demand for the thing sold should be general; and, secondly, that there should arise no suspicion of trickery or adulteration in the public mind. To this end, the supervision exercised over the tobacco manufacture is exceedingly strict. A director-general, responsible to the minister of finance, is placed at the head of the administration, and all the inferior posts of superintendence are filled by officers selected from the Ecole Polytechnique: which means that they are men of honour and unquestionable capacity.

The number of the imperial manufactories is seventeen. Five hundred and twenty-four officers are entrusted with the management of the plantations, and the surveillance of the manufactories. There are thirty-one store-houses; three hundred and fifty-seven wholesale warehouses; and thirty-eight thousand eight hundred and thirty-one retail establishments.

The tobaccoist in France is an official. The post is in the direct gift of the government, and is tenable only during good behaviour. He or she (for a great many of the holders are women) generally owes the appointment to the recommendation of the receiver-general of the district: the applicant is obliged to go through the form of drawing up a petition, which is submitted to the minister of finance, and signed by him on ratification. It is needless to say that the number of candidates to fill each vacant place is very large. Owing to the limited number of tobaccoists' shops, the business is very lucrative. The net profits of some of the shops on the boulevards, range from twenty-five thousand francs to sixty thousand francs a year. The famous Civette, opposite the Palais Royal, is said to yield one hundred and twenty-five thousand francs (five thousand pounds) a-year, but in the case of these well-situated establishments, it is not unusual for the business to be let and sub-let half a dozen times, the titular owner being often a person of high position: the widow of a general officer, who has died poor: or often an old retired officer himself, who has rendered *secret services*, and must be recompensed otherwise than by promotion or the Legion of Honour.

Every year introduces some new improvement into the system of preparation. Some scores of scientific men are continually employed—they are paid to do it and to do nothing else—in studying new methods of ameliorating the culture of tobacco, improving the flavour of the leaves, and so blending the different varieties as to form finer, and more wholesome cigars. But it is in the making of snuff that the French have attained rare perfection. The time required to turn a leaf of tobacco into snuff, according to the method of the "Régie," is four years and two months—a fact which speaks volumes for the care and pains bestowed upon the fabrication.

The "Régie" sells three kinds of tobacco for pipe-smokers. The best goes by the name of "Maryland." It is retailed in yellow packets, and costs five shillings a pound English money. The second quality has been baptised "Caporal." It is that most used, and costs four shillings the pound. The third quality is prepared for the use of soldiers solely; it costs but half the piece of Caporal; but it can only be obtained on presentation of a species of government voucher, to one of which the soldier is entitled every ten days. Tobaccoists are forbidden under heavy penalties to sell this tobacco to civilians.

The "Régie" manufactures six or seven kinds of cigars. The best cost from fifty centimes to a franc each. The large majority of Frenchmen know but five kinds of cigars: the Londres, Trabucos, Millares, Decimos, and Sontellas. Of these five kinds, the Londres is best; it costs twenty-five centimes (twopence halfpenny), and, if carefully selected, is fully equal to the Regalias which cost sixpence in London. The Trabucos cost twenty centimes, the Millares fifteen centimes, the Decimos ten centimes. They are none of them bad, and are all far superior to anything that can be had elsewhere for the money.

The two principal manufactories are in Paris: at the Gros-Cailion, where snuff and pipe-tobacco are made; and at Reuilly, where the higher class of cigars are manufactured. The task is entrusted in the latter establishment entirely to women: of whom there are as many as two hundred and fifty employed. A skilful workwoman can make from ninety to one hundred and fifty Londres in ten hours, and three hundred Sontellas within the same time. Not the least curious circumstance which strikes a visitor at the manufactory of Reuilly is the total silence observed by the two hundred and fifty workers. A whisper is punished by a fine, and work is paid for "by the piece."

Of course the tobacco monopoly enjoyed by the French government has often been made the subject of attack; and reformers are not wanting on the other side of the Channel who would abolish the privilege and open the market. Still, as these innovators are fain to own that the tobacco sold by the Régie is excellent, and that they could not hope to get better anywhere else for the same price, it is probable that these clamours will avail but little, and will, metaphorically and literally, end in—smoke.

THE LEGEND OF DUNBLANE.

IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER II.

I SLEPT soundly during the first part of the night. But about three o'clock I woke suddenly—I might almost say, I started from my sleep. I had not been dreaming; I was not conscious of having heard any noise; but my sleep, somehow or other, was broken suddenly, and I sat up in my bed with a sense of undefined alarm. I listened:

all was still: the southing of the wind among the Scotch firs below the rampart-wall was the only thing I heard. But, feeling restless, I jumped out of bed, went to the window and opened it. There was no moon, but it was a light night. I could distinguish the ivy on the wall beneath; the little door in the angle of the turret opposite, and the dusky forms of the owls that flew past the window. Almost immediately beneath it was a curious old well said to be of wonderful depth, but long since unused. If one dropped a stone in there an interval which seemed like half a minute elapsed before a faint splash told that it had reached the bottom.

I had been at the window a few minutes when the door in the turret opposite opened, with a slight grating sound which attracted my attention. A figure glided forth, and ran swiftly towards the well. I distinguished that it was a woman by the long drapery, and as she came under the window I could just make out that she carried some sort of vessel in her hand. Whatever it was she threw it in, and waited, leaning over the side, until she caught the distant thud of the object as it met the water. Then she returned rather more leisurely than she had come, the door was shut, and, though I waited at the window a full hour, I saw and heard no more.

I do not know that at any other place, at any other time, this circumstance would have aroused my curiosity. As it was, I could not get to sleep again for thinking of it, and speculating what could have been the motive that induced any female of the establishment to rise in the dead of night in order to cast something into the well.

I had to be stirring very early, and I was at my solitary breakfast when Lord Dunblane entered. He looked ghastly, so much so, that I could not help asking if he was ill. He turned fiercely round upon me, demanding why I asked.

"Because you look as if you had not slept," I said.

"And you? Pray how did *you* sleep?" he inquired, knitting his brows. "You were not disturbed? You had no nightmare after Lady Dunblane's conversation last night?"

I had resolved to say nothing of what I had seen, and replied that I had rested pretty well. I was then proceeding to express my thanks to him for his hospitality, when he interrupted me. "If you wish to show yourself a friend, say as little as possible about your visit here to any one. I am

going abroad at once. I have made up my mind that Lady Dunblane can live here no longer. You have heard enough to know how she hates the place—and it disagrees with her, moreover. She has had several epileptic attacks—a severe one this very night; it is evident that the climate does not suit her, and I am recommended to take her to Italy. My lady and I can never agree here. She does all she can to goad me to madness—and perhaps she has succeeded: who can say? People will gossip, Carthews, when we are gone. Prove yourself a friend, and say nothing about our quarrels while you have been here."

I was a good deal surprised at the tenor of this speech, but thought it reasonable upon the whole. There was something in his eye, nevertheless, which disquieted me. Coupling it with Pilson's words, two days previously, and with my own observations, I could not avoid the conviction that the fate to which he himself had just now alluded was imminent. It might be warded off, perhaps, by change of scene, and the removal of the causes of irritation; but it was impossible to look at him steadily, and to doubt that incipient insanity was there. I begged him to act upon his determination of going abroad without loss of time; and then, shaking his hand, I stepped into the chaise, and drove off.

Well, I returned to Aberdeen; and some days after this Pilson called on me. I asked what news he brought of Lord and Lady Dunblane.

"They are gone abroad. I suppose it is the best thing he could do. Her ladyship had a succession of such severe fits that she was unable to leave her room, or to see any one but her maid after you left. I *did* see her once at the window, and her look quite alarmed me. His lordship was much calmer, but he scarcely spoke. His wife's sudden prostration, after all their violent bickerings, affected him a good deal. He is in a bad way, I think, Carthews. I mean that I am very much afraid"—and he pointed significantly to his head.

I told him that I fully shared his apprehensions, and then asked him more particularly to describe the change in Lady Dunblane's appearance.

"The morning I left I was walking round the rampart when I heard one of the windows rattle. I looked up, and there was Lady Dunblane, her head pressed against the panes, and with such a terrible expression of agony in her face as I shall never forget. She kept opening her

mouth, and making the most hideous grimaces at me, so that it was clear that she was not quite in her right senses at the moment. She disappeared suddenly."

"Did you ever see any indication of a tendency to such a malady in her ladyship?" I asked.

"No. I cannot say I ever did," he replied.

"Was no doctor sent for?"

"Yes, the country apothecary came once."

"And what did he say? Did you speak to him?"

"Yes. I saw him in the hall as he was stepping into his buggy. I asked how he found her ladyship. He said she was much prostrated by the violence of the attack, but he seemed a puzzle-headed fellow. No doubt he was awed by the honour of being sent for to the castle; for I could not get much out of him. He seemed dazed; but muttered something about change being good for her ladyship."

"And who attended her during these attacks?" I inquired.

"No one but his lordship and the maid Elspie. My lord told me that his wife was very violent; but he would not suffer any of the men to be sent for, to hold her. He and Elspie, who is a very powerful woman, managed her between them. He said that he had found it necessary to tie her hands. I do not envy him his journey. They left in the family coach an hour after our departure, and were to travel night and day to Leith, where they took ship for Holland."

He then went on to say that the young heir-at-law had returned to London much depressed with his visit, and that the necessary formalities having now been gone through (which I understand to mean that the secret of the haunted room had been duly communicated to him), Mr. Dunblane would in all probability never see the castle again during my lord's lifetime.

I seldom saw Pilson for some time after this conversation; when I did, he told me what little he knew of the Dunblanes; but months often elapsed without his having any direct communication with my lord, and even then the letters he received were mere bald statements and inquiries, exclusively upon matters of business. These, however, were sufficient to show that his mind had not given way; they were lucid and perspicuous in every detail. There was never any mention of her ladyship, for

the obvious reason, as it transpired after a while, that she and my lord were separated. He was travelling now in Italy, now in Hungary, now in the East, while she remained—no one knew exactly where—in Switzerland. At the end of the third year he returned to Dunblane, and shut himself up there, refusing to see any of the neighbours who called. In reply to every inquiry for her ladyship (more especially those which a distant cousin, her only relation, made about this time), he stated that her ladyship's health obliged her to remain on the Continent; her mind had been much weakened by continued epileptic attacks, and she was unequal to correspondence. He stated, further, that she was under excellent medical care, and that though, by reason of the excitement under which she sometimes laboured, it was not deemed advisable that he should visit her often, he made a point of doing so once a year. This statement seems to have been considered satisfactory. Lady Dunblane's friends—and she had very few—were not suspicious, and the world at large troubled itself but little with the domestic concerns of a couple who had lived in isolated grandeur, with rare exceptions, since his lordship's accession to the title. Pilson went twice to the castle, during that year, and, as far as I know, he was the only guest. He gave a gloomy picture of the solitary man shut up in that big place. We both avoided all mention of her ladyship's name; but I now know that he was no easier than I was on that head.

It was towards the close of 1808 that he called on me one morning, at an unusually early hour. His face, his whole manner, betokened that my grave, quiet friend was unusually perturbed. He looked round the room—this very room where we are sitting—drew his chair close to mine, and said in a whisper:

"Carthews, I have come to you in a very distressing emergency. I hardly know whether I am justified in taking this step, but I do know that I can depend on you, and you may materially help me in a most painful and difficult situation."

Without more ado, he then proceeded to say that a young Frenchman, who gave his name as Jean Marcel, had called upon him the previous night, stating that he had lately come from Geneva, where he was in a wine merchant's office, and had been sent on business to Aberdeen. He was the bearer of a small crumpled note, addressed in nearly illegible characters, to M. Pilson,

Attorney, Aberdeen. He stated that he had come by it thus. Shortly before leaving Geneva, it had been his duty to inspect the "recolte" of various vineyards: among them one belonging to the Château d'Osman some miles distant. The house itself was tenanted by an English lady, who was said to be mad or imbecile. At all events she was never heard to speak, and was closely watched by her attendants night and day. She walked on a terrace overlooking the vineyard, but it was never out of sight of a gaunt woman, who was, no doubt, her keeper. The intendant of the estate, who told Jean Marcel these particulars, walked through the vineyard with him, when they saw the unhappy lady on the terrace above. Her appearance had much interested Marcel. He described her as a handsome woman, but with a fixed, woe-begone expression of face, and wearing a black cloak, which entirely concealed her person. In the course of Marcel's inspection, they stood for some time just under the terrace wall, and he spoke to the intendant of his approaching voyage to Aberdeen. There was no doubt but that he was overheard by the lady on the terrace. She disappeared, but a quarter of an hour later, while they were still near the wall, the two men heard the sound of a running footstep upon the terrace, followed by a plaintive moaning, like that of a wounded bird. They looked up, and there she stood, glancing round with an expression of terror to see if she was followed, and of earnest supplication towards the two men beneath. She opened her mouth wide—a clear proof, the intendant seemed to think, of the poor creature's imbecility—then raised both arms up high, when, to his horror, he perceived that she had lost her right hand. With her left, she then suddenly dropped over the wall a paper with a stone inside, and had scarcely done this, when her gaunt attendant appeared upon the terrace. The poor lady's whole demeanour changed; the old fixed look returned, and she began once more, with slow uncertain steps, to pace the terrace. To gratify her, Marcel picked up the paper, and pocketed it, as he walked away. As soon as he was out of sight he examined it.

Outside was scrawled, "Pour l'amour de Dieu remettez cette lettre à son adresse." Within was the note addressed to Pilson. The intendant laughed at the affair, and tried to persuade Marcel to tear up the note. "All mad people imagine themselves to be sane, and this one no doubt wants to persuade her friends that she is unjustly

confined; but you need only look at her to see that she is a lunatic."

Marcel admitted the probability of this, but he could not bring himself to destroy the paper. Whether she was mad or not, the condition of this maimed unhappy creature had aroused his compassion so deeply, that he declared the first thing he would do on arriving at Aberdeen would be to find out the person to whom this note was addressed. And he had done so.

When he had finished this strange narrative, Pilson laid before me a scrap of paper—evidently the blank page torn out of the end of a book—on which was scrawled:

"Help! for God's sake, help! before they kill me. Oh, save me, Mr. Pilson, save me, as you hope to be saved hereafter. E. DUNBLANE."

We looked at each other for some minutes without speaking. At last Pilson said:

"If I consulted my own interest, I should remain silent, or simply enclose these lines to his lordship. Her ladyship's condition, no doubt, justifies any steps that have been taken. I cannot suspect my lord; and if he discovers that I have interfered in his domestic concerns, he will certainly take the management of his affairs out of my hands. But, on the other hand, does not humanity call for some investigation into this? I could not die at peace, remembering that I had turned a deaf ear to such a cry; but I am puzzled what to do, Mr. Carthews. It has occurred to me that you may have business connexions with Geneva, and might, perhaps, make inquiries which would not compromise you as they would me."

In other words, Pilson was anxious to ease his conscience at as little risk to himself as might be. I did not blame him; my interest was too deeply stirred for me not to follow up the inquiry with the keenest avidity. But then, as Pilson had hinted, it is true that I had nothing to lose. I promised him that I would write that very day to a correspondent at Geneva, and desire him to leave no stone unturned towards discovering the truth.

I had to wait some weeks for the answer. The commission was one the execution of which was beset with difficulties. The village pasteur, the doctor, the intendant of the vineyards, and all the neighbours were applied to, but little additional information could be gathered. At last the maire of the district was induced to investigate the case, upon representations being made to

him that there existed suspicions as to the treatment which the incarcerated lady—whether insane or only imbecile—met with. After a vigorous resistance they forced an entry into the château. The sight that met them was heart-rending. The poor creature lay dying upon her bed, and but for this intervention would have been denied the last consolations of religion. When the pasteur knelt down, however, and questioned her, she only shook her head and moaned. Then, with an effort, she opened her mouth wide, and, to their horror, they perceived that *she had no tongue*.

They implored her to write down the name of the perpetrator of this barbarous crime. But either she had no strength, or else she was praying, poor soul, for grace to forgive her persecutors, rather than for retribution. She listened devoutly to the good pasteur's prayers, and a glorious smile lighted up her tear-worn eyes as the death-film gathered over them. So the unhappy lady passed away. The woman Elspie was, of course, seized, and subjected to a rigorous cross-examination. She declared that the lady who was just dead had been thus mutilated by her husband one night when goaded into a state of insane rage by his wife's discovery of a secret, to which he attached a superstitious importance, and which she threatened to proclaim to all the world. In the struggle to defend herself, her right wrist was also severed. The woman maintained that her mistress had ever since been subject to violent fits of delirium, necessitating restraint. This I do not believe; there is no proof of it whatever. How far the rest of her story was true, it was impossible to say, and will never now be known. There were probabilities in favour of it; but, on the other hand, might not this wretch herself have been the instrument? I did not forget that I had seen her (as I have now no sort of doubt) on that fatal night stealing out to throw *something* into the well. Of her complicity, at all events, there was ample proof, since from the first she was the attendant upon her ill-fated mistress. But the hand of justice, for all that, was stayed.

The very same day that I received the letter containing the foregoing particulars, and while Pilson and I were deliberating what steps must now be taken, the news of an appalling catastrophe, which had

happened thirty-six hours previously, reached us. Lord Dunblane had been burnt in his bed, and the greater part of the castle destroyed. How the fire originated was never known, but it broke out from his lordship's room in the dead of night, and three sides of the quadrangle were burnt to the ground before the flames could be got under. The lovers of coincidences tried afterwards to make out that Lord Dunblane and his wife died the same night; the superstitious even fabricated a theory that, struck with remorse, upon learning, by second sight, of his wife's death, he had himself fired the castle, and resolutely perished in the flames. But all this is purely imaginary. It is sufficiently remarkable that these deaths should have been so near one another; but Lady Dunblane died at least five days before her husband; and as to the supposition of his lordship's self-destruction, the only ground for it was his strange mental condition, which was no worse than it had been for the last four years.

The woman Elspie was set at large by the authorities at Geneva, no one coming forward as her accuser. Mr. Pilson thought, and I believe he was right, that now both Lord and Lady Dunblane were dead it was better this terrible story should not be made public. It oozed out, in the course of time, as almost all such scandals do, but not through me. It was only when I found that all sorts of false or garbled versions of the circumstances were current in society that I ever mentioned what I knew, and that was years afterwards, when, in default of heirs, the title of Dunblane had become extinct.

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